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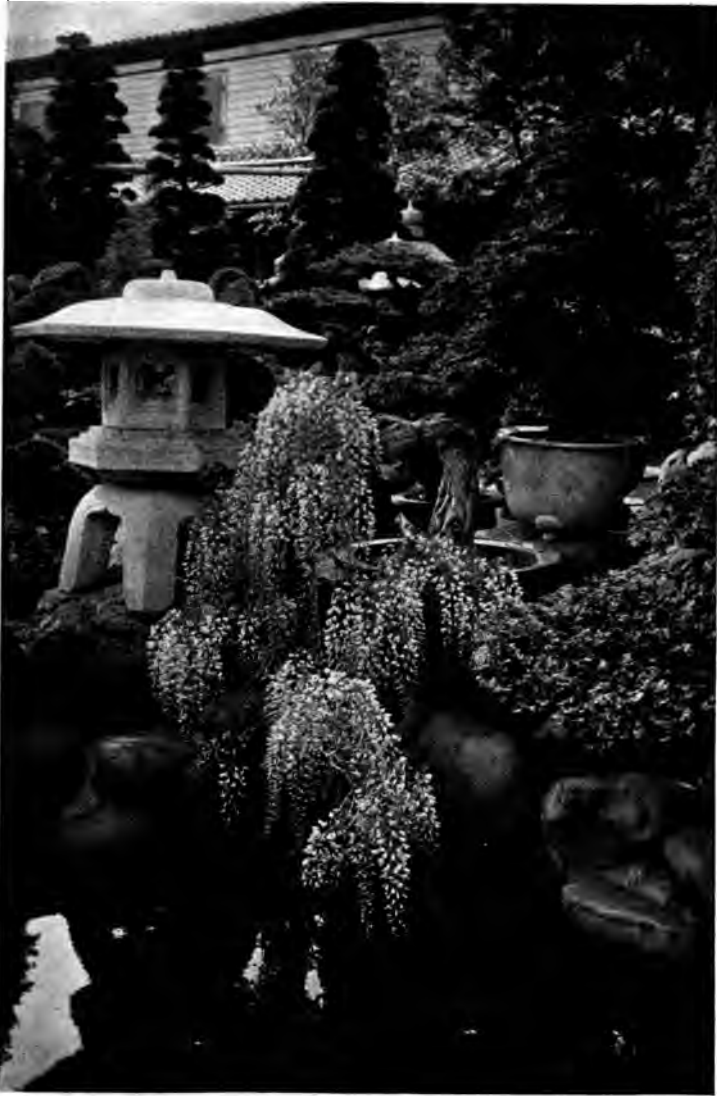
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**THE HEART OF
O SONO SAN**

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HE passed his time in the garden
training the wistaria.

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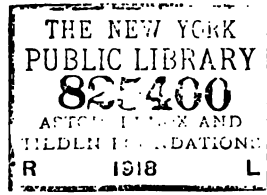
The Heart of O Sono San

BY
ELIZABETH COOPER
*Author of "My Lady of the Chinese Courtyard,"
"Drusilla with a Million," etc.*

WITH THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS IN DUO
TONE FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



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ROY VAN
CLUB
YASSEL

PREFACE

THE traveler in Dai Nippon to-day finds three Japans. The new, aggressive Japan of the Treaty Ports, the Japan of Beauty and the Japan of Mystery.

The Japan of Beauty makes the most general appeal. All may come under the spell of this Japan; may grow to love the soft, deep blue of the sky, the tender color of its waters, and the splendor of its sunny days, but the exquisite charm of its homes, the never failing courtesy, the simplicity of heart of its people, their patriotism for their beloved country and their unswerving loyalty to their Emperor, are practically a closed book to the world outside.

Sympathy is limited by comprehension, and we only sympathize where we understand, and we do not understand the people of this Eastern land. The things seen on the surface, things made for alien peoples, are mistaken for the real, the genuine. The trivialities of their lightest fancy and the skill of their touch rather than their earnestness and faith, are praised. The inner thoughts and ideals of this reticent race are not for show; one must delve deep to find them.

In the cities the tourist sees the Japanese wearing foreign dress, eating foreign food, living in

semi-foreign houses and imitating the European in various ways. They say "The Japanese has become Europeanized, he sees that the civilization of the West is the best." But this seeming imitation of the Occident is for no love of the foreign type. It is a deliberate sacrifice, a momentary necessity in order to preserve national independence. Japan needs ships and well trained armies and Western education and bags of gold, and it is from the foreigner that she must learn the means of acquiring them and their use. She understands that she must borrow from the West, its inventions, its mechanical knowledge, that she may adapt it to the needs of her country if she would maintain her place among the world powers. She realizes that without the battleships, the well trained army, the material prosperity, her artistic instincts, her fine civilization and her ideals will avail her little.

But to imagine that the emotional tendency of a race can be changed in half a century is preposterous. Emotional life, which is stronger than intellectual life, can no more be altered suddenly, than can the surface of a lake be changed by the passing of clouds above it.

Many are striving with all their strength for the conservation of all that is best in the old life, in the life of their fathers, and they are opposing fearlessly the introduction of anything not essen-

tial to national self-preservation or helpful to national self-development. The women are the leaders in this movement, they are the guardians of the old ideals.

They still believe that the only qualities that benefit a woman are gentle obedience, chastity, mercy and quietness. She is taught from infancy to love, yield, help others and forget self. Under such influences she is ready to make any sacrifice, and brave enough to bear any cross. Her education within the home cultivates simplicity of heart, natural grace of manner, unquestioning obedience and love of duty as they are cultivated nowhere outside of Japan.

The woman of Japan owes absolute obedience and loyalty to her parents, her clan, and her country. She must be willing to sacrifice for them her life, if necessary. It seems a hard law to the Woman of the West, but it has produced one of the sweetest, finest types of womanhood that the world has ever known.

I have tried to show the effect of this training upon a Japanese woman's life. Her sacrifice, first to parents, then to family, and finally for her Emperor. How she was taught in babyhood to say "Sayonara," Good-by, to her dearest treasure, in young girlhood to her most cherished dreams, and in womanhood to more than life itself.

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PART I

THE HEART OF O SONO SAN

CHAPTER I

There was a great clattering of geta as the cousins and aunts and many, many members of the Tokuwara clan came up the stone flagged path to the door, where Yuki the hostess was awaiting them. Clogs were dropped, bows were made so low that the shiny, black, elaborately dressed heads of the kneeling visitors touched the matting in front of them. Breaths were drawn sibilantly through the teeth, and a person must know well the Japanese language to follow the honorifics used, as younger members of the great family greeted their elders.

They passed, a laughing, chattering group, into the living room, and seated themselves upon the cushions placed upon the spotless tatami; hibachis with steaming hot water kettles upon the coals, and small trays with tea pots and infinitesimal cups were placed in front of guests; little pipes were taken from obis or sleeves, embroid-

ered tobacco pouches were produced and the women settled themselves to have a few hours of real pleasure.

It was seldom that so many members of the Tokuwara family found themselves together, but to-day was the thirty-third day after the birth of the eldest child of the house. They had all gone with her to the presentation at the temple, and, having done their duty to the Gods, they were willing to spend a time in gossip over the affairs of the family.

They had seated themselves comfortably when a shrill voice was heard at the doorway, and Yuki left the room hurriedly, while the other guests looked at each other questioningly.

"It can't be O Hana San?" asked one.

The voice was heard again and the guests rose quickly and filed into the reception room, because O Hana San, the honorable head of the Tokuwara family in the female line, must be met at the door with most respectful greetings. This oldest surviving member of the clan had keen eyes and a most observing manner, and, what was worse, a lasting memory and a mind of her own which she could express with forcible politeness. Those keen eyes would notice the amount of respectful homage placed in a bow by a younger member of the family, and that shrill voice would quite likely publicly reprimand the

delinquent one for her lack of the respect due to age, and tell her many of her hidden faults in addition. Consequently when O Hana San was lifted from her kago, she was faced by a row of smiling, welcoming faces, and heads touched the floor in respectful salutations.

"Well—well," she said. "So you're all here. I'm like royalty, I arrive late. I would not be hurried and shaken and I wanted to stop and admire the fields and I went a roundabout way to see if Taka had really built the new house he has talked so much about, and I see he has *not*, he has only put on an addition. You might just as well ask the loan of a comb from a man who is bald as to believe some people when they begin to tell you what they have built and— Why, O Seki San, are you here? I thought the children—what? you brought them both? I can see them then? And O Satsu San, now that you are an honorable mother-in-law, you can find time to come out once in a while. That's right, we do not enjoy ourselves until we are forty. Then our time begins. Have you all been to the temple? I did not come in time for the ceremony, the steps are too many for my old feet, and they will not allow me to be carried up the last flight, so I find that the Gods enjoy my worship just as much before the family Butsudan. All spots are equally pure for the service of the Gods, I think.

Once a year, at New Year's time, is all the public worship they get from me, and quite likely they are as well pleased as I am."

Chatting all the time, observing every one and everything, she was finally seated in the place of honor. All things needful for her comfort were placed before her, and after drawing from her tiny pipe a few whiffs of tobacco smoke, she began to look over her numerous relatives.

"What a family of Tokuwaras we are," she said. "But if we go on having girls, the family will soon die off. Yuki, why was your first born a girl?" and she turned her sharp eyes upon her hostess. Pretty Yuki blushed and stammered and looked as if she realized that it was a crime most heinous on her part to give birth to a girl instead of a boy to carry on the name of Tokuwara. She could not find an adequate reply, and the old lady went on, evidently not expecting replies, being perfectly satisfied if she could talk.

"Did she get the kimona I sent her?" she inquired.

"Yes," answered the little mother, and the black head went to the floor. "It was most honorably kind of you to think of the present."

"Well, I wanted her to be presented in a suitable gown, but did you notice the embroidery in the crest?"

"It was most beautifully done," answered Yuki.

The old lady chuckled.

"It should have been. My granddaughter, the little minx, thinks she can embroider in some new way she has learned, but she had to take the one on the left sleeve out seven times before it suited me. There are more tears mixed with that left crest than silk. Some of the younger generation think we old people should sit on the family shelf and smoke. Our knowledge is a relic of the middle ages. But I tell you it is harder to drown a fish than— By the way," and she groped around in her voluminous sleeve, "here is a piece of egg plant, the first of the season. Tie it with a red string over the door post, then Sono won't have prickly heat. It is a sure remedy. I tried it with all mine after I learned about it. Before O Yuri San told me about it, my eldest boy was greatly troubled. Why, there is Yoné. You have come from so far, farther than I. I am glad to see you, you rarely visit the family."

A kindly faced little old lady who had not spoken before said, "Yes, I go out very little, I live so far away, but—I—I wished very much to come as—as I wanted to tell Yuki—" and she faltered.

All eyes were turned in her direction.

"What did you want to tell Yuki?" demanded O Hana San.

"I just wished to warn her—there is a peculiar sickness among the children in our neighborhood. They become ill and no one knows the cause, but—but—O Kiku San says it is because there are so many spirits of mothers flying in the air at night who died in giving their little ones birth, and if they see the clothing of children, from envy they touch them and the babies sicken. I wished to warn Yuki—she is a young mother and might not think and leave the little dresses out at night after washing them——" and the kindly old voice faltered again.

Yuki looked at her gratefully. "It is kind of you, my Honorable Aunt, to come so far to tell me. I will take great care."

No one laughed at the superstition, because all believed it, and that brought to the remembrance of each woman some sickness of her own children, or a miraculous cure made through the intercession of the family priest or a pilgrimage to some famous temple.

Presents were brought forth from sleeves or unwrapped from little packages tied with colored paper strings.

"Here," said a cousin from the next village, "I brought this picture of a devil beating a gong, to hang over Sono's head at night. It will

keep her from crying. I tried it with my second and my third and fourth and it worked like a charm. I did not have it with my first and he cried every night until I wanted to give him to the crows."

"But do you not want it?" inquired Yuki as she took the picture.

The old lady laughed. "Why should I want it? I have passed it around the family until it is nearly finished, but I pasted a good piece of cloth on the back of it, and it will last a few generations yet."

A child toddled into the room, a tiny baby that looked hardly a year old. Hana San looked shocked.

"Who is the mother of that child?" she inquired.

"I am," spoke up a meek voice.

"He should not walk at that age," said Hana San. "Is he a year old? Put a bag of rice on his back so that he will stumble or he will go to live in a foreign land, if he walks before he is a year old. Well—well—here is little O Haru San with her fingers in her mouth instead of her thumb. She will be no burden upon her parents. We had better make a marriage with her and my youngest grandson, who is certainly going to rise in the world, as he shows all the signs. He pushes himself out of his bed clothes at night, until his

head is on the tatami, instead of snuggling down into them as a sensible child should. Is that your youngest, O Niku San?" she asked, seeing a young mother cuddling her baby to her.

"Yes," answered the mother.

"What is it, a boy or a girl?" inquired O Hana San.

"It is a girl," answered Niku with a blush as if she too had failed to fulfill her wifely duty.

"Another girl," ejaculated O Hana San. "What did I tell you? We are getting to be a family of women."

The mother looked up at the old lady and said with a little note of apology in her voice, "I understand, there are a great many girls, and I felt very badly at first, but—but—I do not feel my sorrow so deeply—because—because——"

"Why do you not?" demanded Hana San. "Don't stammer, speak out."

"Because," said the mother in a low voice, "last year when I lost my boy my heart was broken, and I made in his little hand before he was taken from me the letter of his first name, and prayed the Gods that he should be returned to me. Now he has come back," and she unrolled the pink fingers of the sleeping baby and held up the tiny palm for Hana San to inspect. "Dost see within the hand?"

Hana San bent over it closely. "I see no more

than is within the hands of all children of two months of age," she replied.

"No?" inquired the mother in astonishment. "I see it quite plainly, the letter I wrote in my boy's hand. It has lessened the pain in my heart, because I see his eyes in the eyes of my Yuri, and know my boy has come to me again."

The guests inspected the little hand, and there were exclamations as some believed they found the ideograph, while others looked at the mother a little skeptically. Finally a quiet voice spoke up, wishing to change the subject, as a few remarks had brought the tears to the eyes of the believing mother.

"My uncle, the abbot of the monastery, sent from the Temple of Jizo these wooden blocks, and says if Sono has the whooping cough to clap them in front of her when she is threatened with the seizure and the devil will pass around her instead of entering into her mouth. When she is cured O Inkyo Sama must make another pair and bring them to the temple."

The words "O Inkyo Sama" caused Hana San to lift her head suddenly.

"Where is that honorable relative of mine? Has he returned from the temple?" she asked.

As she spoke the words the shojii slid back and a face looked in. It was the face of an old man, with worn, loving lines about the mouth, dry

beds of old smiles which gave to him an indescribable expression of gentleness and sweetness. He saw the group of women, who all stopped chattering, and a scared look came into his eyes as he tried to back away. But the keen eyes of Hana San had seen him, and with a laugh and a flourish of her pipe at him, she said, "No you don't. Come right in here, I want to talk to you."

He widened the shojii and came slowly into the room, looking as if he would turn about immediately and fly for safety if the opportunity were given him. A place was made for him opposite Hana San and he knelt down upon the mat, placed his hands upon his knees, and waited, like an embarrassed school boy suddenly brought before a class of girls.

The old lady puffed slowly at her pipe, all the time critically regarding the man opposite her. Then knocking out the ashes and commencing again to refill it, she said, "You are looking well. How long were you away on that foolish jaunt of yours?"

"I do not call it foolish," replied the old man with spirit, and his face flushed.

"Never mind. I don't imagine you do. The ways of a foolish man are right in his own eyes. But you do not answer my question although I know to the year, month, day and hour, how



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***THEY** had all gone with her to the
presentation at the Temple.*



SHE saw a fisherman going down to the river.

much time you spent, but I do not know how much yen."

"I was gone five years," replied Inkyo Sama, "and I spent no yen. I lived with the pilgrims and ate what was given me."

"I am surprised you came home. When one has begged three days one can not give it up," said the old lady sarcastically. "What good did it do you except to exercise your legs climbing temple steps? What did you learn?"

"I learned that with coarse food to eat, clear water to drink, and with the bended arm as a pillow, one can find happiness," said the old man softly.

"You always were queer," said O Hana San with a laugh. "I remember what a time we had with you because you wanted to become a priest, and how you sulked and refused to marry poor Oné San; but finally you did and had to support a family and you got your position as official and forgot your young foolishness, I presume."

The old man said quietly, "I made a poor official, I would have made a good priest."

"Never mind, an official you were until your fiftieth birthday, when you did a very good thing. When one is fifty it is time the younger generation shoulders the burdens and the old one retires to the Inkyo. I ought to have done it twenty years ago, but I would die in the inner

room, not being able to run things," said the old lady, talking so fast it was hard to follow her.

"Especially if you could not talk, O Hana San," said Inkyo Sama with a laugh.

O Hana San laughed with him.

"Yes, what is the use of getting old if you can't talk? For forty years I had to hold my peace, and allow my elders to have their say. I was a properly brought up young girl and taught that silence, modesty and obedience were my only birthrights, and when I became a mother-in-law and head of the household, well—I may be old, a samisen whose strings are broken by the heavy hands of time, but if I can't make music, I can still make a lot of noise."

The guests joined with her in the laugh. When the little chatter had subsided, she looked keenly again at Inkyo Sama.

"What else did you learn on that pilgrimage of yours?" she asked.

"I learned the Way of the Gods and the Path of Truth," he replied. She shook her head.

"There are as many paths to the Gods as there are feet to tread them," she said. "Ninety-nine people hunt for happiness, the hundredth stays at home and finds it. It is the same with your Truth."

"But," protested Inkyo Sama, "one does not want Truth given him. If it should be offered

to me with one hand and with the other the Search for Truth, I would have the second," and there was a little ring of impatience in his voice.

O Hana San laughed and looked around at the listening women. "Old fires burn yet, if it is only with the dead wood of the past," she said as if speaking to them only. Then she turned to Inkyo Sama. "As for me, the heart is the house of Buddha, and I don't have to go trotting over the world to find him. He is larger than his temple, wider than his altar. Your relation to the Gods is determined by your relations to your neighbors, and I am a good neighbor. Life is not given us to enjoy, but to use. If we all went pilgrimaging around the world hunting up the Gods, what would become of those who had to stay at home? When I see the pilgrims coming here, clothed in white, great flat hats on their heads, sandals on their tired feet, covered with dust and weary—I can't understand them."

"Neither could a blind man understand the pleasure of looking at green grass," said the old man with a smile.

"Well, I live in this world, and I am contented with it so far," she said.

O Inkyo Sama did not speak for a moment, then he said impersonally, "Those whose eyes never see beyond this world are like those who

mistake the servants of the lowest rank for the King—take the slave for the Master.”

O Hana San shrugged her shoulders.

“As I said before, religion does not lie in the temple, nor in the incense, nor the candles. All spots are equally pure for the service of the Gods,” she said with a sharp tone to her voice.

“Yes, that is true, O Hana San,” said the old man. “We are not made sacred by the touch of the vessels on the altar. We may touch common things and they become by the love we put into the touch, sacred. One does not have to travel to find the Gods, but it is good to go away and find oneself. The heart is a lake and the five senses are five streams flowing into it. In order to find out the real contents of the lake we must stop the streams for a time, and the things they bring forth from the mountains.”

“Yes, but why did you go? You could find out all that kneeling before the family Butsudan, and you would have saved yourself a lot of trouble. Why did you go?” she inquired with real interest.

The old man was quiet for a moment, then he raised his head and there was a far away look in his eyes.

“Ah, thou wouldst not understand, O Hana San,” he said softly. “Things such as that can not be explained, one would need the language

of the Gods." He was quiet again for a moment, then he said, "I went to find the Court of Silent Dreams—where I could leave my cares behind. Like the Blessed Master I wanted to brush the world aside and walk amid the stars."

O Hana San looked at him sharply, then at the others, and pointing to Inkyo Sama she touched her head lightly with her fingertips, and laughed softly. "A crab has crept into his brain and clenched it with his claws," she said with a mock-pitying tone. "We must not mind him. But to change the subject from the Gods and come to earthly matters, if your august spirit will allow you to discuss mundane affairs, tell us Tokuwaras what is going to become of us. We are getting more poverty stricken each year. You, as the head of the family, should have learned something on this subject while searching for the Truth as you call it. What is going to become of us?"

The old man looked a little puzzled, then he replied, "That which hath been is that which shall be—and that which hath been done is that which shall be done, and there is nothing new under the sun."

O Hana San knocked the ashes from her pipe into the bamboo ash receiver with little angry jerks.

"Listen to him," she said. "One can see he

has been associating too long with priests. That sounds like one of those papers you receive when you go before the altar to learn of the future. It would fit anything and anybody. It sounds much and means little, like the wind in a hollow bamboo. But my son's son tells us that unless some of us go into trade, we will all starve. Japan is losing her use for the old Samurai, and family does not count except in a little respect from the lower classes, and that does not fill the rice box. But the way things are keeping on, there will be no lower classes soon, because they are trying to intermarry with their betters. It makes my face burn. I had rather see one of my grandchildren under the gray stones, than do what Ichinoya did. He married his daughter to the son of a rich rice merchant." She was quiet for a moment, then she sighed and took a few puffs from her pipe. Finally she said, "Well, we shouldn't think of the past. Trying to banish the remembrance of happier days is like trying to keep the crows from the rice fields—they keep coming back."

"Everything is only for a day, both that which remembers and that which is remembered," said Inkyo Sama.

"Yes," answered O Hana San. "All things are impermanent in the Province of the Gods, even

the Gods themselves; unless we except the two who always go together."

"Who are they?" some one inquired.

The old lady turned a chastening eye upon the speaker.

"What kind of an education have you if you don't know about the Gods?" she asked. I mean Fuki-no-Kame, the God of Luck, and his black shadow Bimbogami. You must know the last; he is the closest friend the Tokumaras have at present."

Inkyo Sama chuckled softly. "There is one thing that is permanent, we know that we can't flee from Bimbogami. He will always be waiting for us, as for the priest who resolved to go to a distant province to get away from him."

O Hana San looked up. "You never can get far from a priest in your talk. Well—what happened to him?" she asked sharply.

"On the night that he decided to go he had a dream in which he saw a very poor, starved boy weaving sandals. He had made so many that the priest wondered at the great pile before him, and said to the boy, 'For what purpose are you making so many sandals?' The boy answered, 'I am going to travel with you, I am Bimbogami.'"

They all laughed at the story—O Hana San with the rest—then she said, "That brings me

back to what we were talking about. We Tokuwaras must do something, and for one thing we must find suitable families in which to marry our girls that are coming so fast. A girl is of no use, I suppose, unless a marriage is made for her that will at least not lower the family standing. We must look to it that this new grandchild of yours has a proper mate. I must look over the families and see who has a son that will be suitable when Sono grows up."

She smoked for a time in silence, then she said with a softened tone to her voice, "I have watched so many of our boys and girls grow up—seen them as children with the spirit of childhood, then with the spontaneous joy of youth—the age that sees the promised land—that never looks back—whose watchword is to-morrow. Our boys whose hearts are windows opening into an ideal world—but the windows become gradually closed by lust and passion and resentment and avarice, above all, avarice. And our girls, at first they carry a lantern of joy that you think will lighten the world, then we old put out our hands filled with traditions and customs, with 'Thou shalt nots' and 'Thou must obey the dead letter of old laws,' until the lights are dimmed and only a flickering flame is left that finally wavers and dies. Ah—why can we not let them keep their music, our birds of a thousand songs." She was quiet for

a time and no one interrupted her musing, then she shook herself and looked at the faces watching her. She laughed a low little laugh and said, "I am wandering again, but to come back to Sono—"

The old man interrupted her, a troubled look in his kindly eyes.

"I don't think we need yet to think about Sono's future. Let her grow up, she may have ideas of her own. Let her have the day dreams of the young."

The old lady looked at him sharply. "You don't talk like a man. Ideas of her own, indeed. When were we women ever allowed to have ideas of our own upon such subjects? We have dreams and visions perhaps, and it would be better for us if we had not. When the dreams are taken from us, when we have to give up the visions for the realities—well, it is better not to dream at all, then there is no time of bitter dawn." She puffed slowly at her little pipe, then she said in a low voice, "Old age is like a deserted palace, where only memories remain. Bitter memories mostly, with only a few sweet ones to lighten the burden."

O Inkyo Sama said nothing. He was the only one in the room that remembered that O Hana San had given all the love of her young heart to a neighbor's son, but was forced to marry the

head of another great family in the province. He remembered that she had rebelled with all the force of her very forceful nature, and when at last she was compelled to yield, that she had nearly died from sorrow and despair. But when the fact was accomplished, when she went to the home of her husband, she had made a very good wife and mother, and to all intents and purposes the love of her girlhood was forgotten. Yet, as he looked at her as she sat there with a far away look in her eyes, he realized that it was not entirely forgotten. There was still the remembrance in her old heart of the love of her youth. He sat quietly for a few moments, then he rose. "May I take my leave?" he inquired of O Hana San.

She looked at him at first as if she had not heard him, and he repeated his question. Then she seemed to remember where she was and she said with the shrill tone that was familiar to them all, "Yes, but come to me one of these days, and bring that book of record. I would like to see the seal of the monasteries you visited. I think it a wicked waste of time."

"I do not think so," said Inkyo Sama.

"It was a pure waste of time," reiterated the old lady with a decisive shake of her head.

"Perhaps," said Inkyo Sama, as he turned in the open shojii. "Perhaps," and he spoke so

softly that only those near the open door could hear him, "but it was the lotus time of my life."

"When the shojii had closed behind Inkyo Sama, the old lady refilled her pipe and murmured half to herself, "Inkyo Sama is a lovable failure. Perfect success is not reached by many, absolute failure is the lot of the few, but the narrow missing of the mark is the fate of the majority of men. They are not great, they are not small. They miss the mark by a hair's breadth. The chain is not of brass, it is of gold with a link missing."

As she was talking, little tables were brought in and a bountiful dinner was served. During the meal the talk turned again to that always interesting subject to the Japanese mother: children, their care, their diseases and the remedies necessary for their cure. Yuki was admonished and given recipes and told of talismans and shrines at which to pray for the welfare of her little one. In the midst of the conversation Sono was brought in. She looked very pretty in her gay kimona with the Tokuwara crest upon the sleeves and between the tiny shoulders. She was passed around, each one admiring, criticizing or comparing the new arrival to other members of the family, both living and dead. Her eyes were exactly like those of a great aunt long since passed away, and one could plainly see in the

faint arch of her eyebrow a resemblance to a famous hero of the family, who was now but a tradition to the younger members of the clan.

When she came to Hana San a tender light came into the latter's old eyes. She took the baby into her arms and looked down into the little face that stared up at her solemnly.

"Another woman child," she said softly, "to be taught that all her pleasure in life is dependent upon the happiness of others. Thou must learn the lesson, little one, the lesson of patience, and unselfishness—that is thy woman's lot. Thou must learn the two words, renunciation and obedience. The lesson that for women to live is to obey—to live a day is to obey a day—to live a year is to obey a year. At times the path will be rough for thy woman's feet, and thou wilt stumble and fall, but thou wilt learn to pick thyself up and follow it again." As she handed the child back to the nurse she gave it a little pat and said, "Thou wilt be like the blossoming plum tree in the springtime when thou art a woman grown. Thou wilt have the qualities that would be a blemish in a rock but that are things of beauty in a rose. Thou wilt need the Gods; may they be with thee."

The others were silent. Finally the old lady gave herself a little shake as if throwing off the half melancholy feeling she had inspired, and

said with a light laugh, "Well—this will never do. Men were born to eat rice and grumble and you must all get home and see that the rice pot is on the coals. The shadows on the walls tell me that it is time all women were within their own courtyards."

She rose, and the others followed her example. Children were collected from the garden where they had been playing, tiny faces and hands were washed, little kimonas straightened, and, after O Hana San had been comfortably tucked into her kaga and wished a respectful good-by, with much laughter and many thanks to their hostess, they all clattered away.

Yuki watched her guests until they passed from the gate-way, then she turned and entered the house. She took the baby from the tired arms of the maid servant, entered a corner room and sat down upon the soft tatami, facing the open shojii. From it she saw the ocean as in a picture frame, the gray horizon dotted with the white sails of the returning fishing fleet. Near the shore were clumsy looking junks, manned by crews of swarthy men dressed in their one garment of blue, either flapping in the air or tucked up under the waist band. As they approached the shore they rose, cast off their one garment, and leaping overboard dragged the boats by great ropes up the sandy beach until they were

out of danger from the heavy tides. She could hear their faint "hai-hais," as they chanted, and worked in unison with the chant.

She saw the great black nets thrown over bamboo poles to dry, making the water-front look like an immense spider's web. She heard the dull buffet of sound like a heart-beat in its muffled strength as the great waves rolled far up the beach. Then her eyes left the restless sea and she looked at the town nestling at the foot of the mountains, with its gray thatch-roofed houses crowding close as if to dip their feet in the waters of the bay. She saw the street leading from the sea-front—a long vision of gray wooden houses with little balconies under sloping roofs—small shops with their multicolored flags covered with huge Chinese ideographs, fluttering in the breeze.

At the end of the town with its back to the mountain, above the tile-capped wall rose the blue-gray roofs of the temple for which the town was famous, and to which the pious from all parts of Japan made pilgrimage. Beyond the temple in the shadowings of old trees were the moss-covered stones, with their tall wooden tablets rising like sentinels behind, under which lay the village dead.

She saw the fish peddler with his great straw mushroom-shaped hat, his open coat of blue, through which could be seen the bare brown skin,

his feet in straw sandals, balancing on his shoulders the bamboo from which swung the empty baskets that this morning had been filled with squirming fish. He had done his day's work and was now slowly going to one of those little houses down where the fishermen lived. She saw the sweetmeat seller stopped by the two little children of her neighbor, whose fluttering wide sleeves as they hurried after the man, made them look like two gay little butterflies.

Yuki watched the familiar scene for a time, then a movement caused her to turn her face towards the head pillowed on her arm. She softly touched the dark hair. As she was caressing the baby, the shoji opened and Inkyo Sama came in. Yuki looked up and smiled at the kindly eyes looking down upon her.

"Are they gone?" he inquired in a whisper.

Yuki laughed at the tone of his voice. "Yes, they are all gone," she replied.

Inkyo Sama sighed a sigh of relief, and came into the room and sat down beside her. "O Hana San is a most worthy woman," he said, "but she has a tongue of exceeding power. Like the hardy bamboo it grows in strength with each new year. Didst enjoy the day?"

"Yes," said Yuki, but she sighed.

Inkyo Sama looked at her questioningly, but said nothing for a few moments, then leaning

over he touched the little head snuggling against the mother and said in a low voice: "Whether brought forth upon the mountain or in the field, it matters nothing. More than a treasure of a thousand ryo a baby precious is."

Yuki sighed again, and when she looked up her eyes were filled with tears.

"But why, O Inkyo Sama, could the Gods not have sent me a man-child? I have made many pilgrimages to Koyasu-Jizo, I made many prayers and they have not been answered."

"Ah, but thou hast thy baby," he replied. "We must welcome them all. In the children our parents return to us, in the children we live again. Thou hast thy child in thine arms."

"Yes, and—and—" faltered Yuki; then she looked up at Inkyo Sama and said with a little quaver in her voice, "I—I love my baby, O Inkyo Sama, I love her more perhaps because she is a woman-child and her path will not be free and clear from sorrow. But the family—O Hana San—"

Inkyo Sama laughed and reached over and patted the hand that was holding the baby against her breast.

"Thou must not mind O Hana San—her tongue is bitter but her heart is sweet. We will guard thy little one and take her sorrows upon

our shoulders. I will be her burden carrier, Yuki."

Yuki was silent, and after watching her for a few moments and seeing the soft mother love in the eyes that were resting upon the baby, Inkyo Sama said as he rose, "I will leave thee for a time, O Yuki San. Thou must not grieve because the Gods have sent thee a woman-child. The morning glory has its place the same as the pine tree."

He softly closed the shojii behind him and mother and baby were left alone. For a time Yuki was quiet, then as the baby stirred restlessly in her arms she drew her closer, and looking down at the tiny face, she began to croon in an undertone the time-honored song of Japanese motherhood:

"Sleep, Baby, sleep,

Why are the honorable ears of the hare so honorable long?

'Tis because his mother ate the leaves of the loquat tree,

The leaves of the bamboo grass

That is why his ears are so honorable long."

CHAPTER II

The family of Tokuwara had lived for generations in the little unknown town, hidden by the mountains that rose straight from the blue waters of the Inland Sea. Every one knew that behind those high, blue-gray tiled walls lived the head of the Tokuwara clan. He had been in his younger days a small official in this seaside town, but following an old time Japanese custom, when he was fifty years of age he had resigned his position and his responsibilities in favor of his son and retired to the "inner room" and became "O Inkyo Sama." Then he had been able to fulfill the one great ambition of his life. He made the Sejaji, the long pilgrimage to the Thousand Shrines of the Nichiren Sect of Buddhism. With pilgrim's staff in hand, clothed in white, the pilgrim's gong attached to his waist, he had led the care-free, happy life of the wanderer, sleeping in pilgrim's inns, eating what was given him by the kindhearted, stopping weeks at a time with some congenial priest or devout follower of the Lord of Lords. They were the happiest years of his life, and as he had wandered care-free over the country-side, he had felt that

he was indeed beloved of the Gods. He had returned with the book in his hand, stamped with the seals of a thousand temples, to show an admiring world, and to hand down to posterity as an example of his faith.

The son, Sono's father, tried on his meager salary to keep the outside world from knowing to what extent the fortunes of the great family had fallen. But it was impossible for him to maintain the ancestral home so that visitors would not realize that the God of poverty was always on the door step, and consequently he had become a morose, silent, seemingly hard man, who rebelled against the losing struggle he was making.

The mother of Sono, delicate, dainty, showing in her pale, clear skin and slim oval face her ancestry, was of a family equal in rank with the Tokuwara. Her people had also lost their wealth, but they could not entirely lose their standing among a people who so highly respected family and position, and even the commoner who was beginning to talk of his "rights," saluted her respectfully on the rare occasions when she passed along the street.

The only other members of the household were Matsu, the servant, and her husband Togo. Matsu had been with Yuki in her girlhood home and was devoted to her. These two servants re-

ceived so little pay that it could hardly be called a wage. They were given a home and twice a year a present of clothing was made them. Matsu was treated as one of the family, sharing the joys and sorrows of her beloved mistress, and relieving her of the burden of the heavier work.

The Tokuwara lived in a great house surrounded by an immense garden. The high walls shutting out the noise of the little town, also shut off from the view of the passer-by the fact that the old garden was neglected, that it needed the care of a gardener, not the untrained hands of Inkyo Sama and Togo, although they did their best. The old man, who loved flowers and all things beautiful, passed the greater part of his time in the garden, training the dwarf pine trees, replacing the stones in the winding pathways, putting new pebbles and fine sand in the sand garden, training the wistaria and cutting the dying limbs from the cherry and the plum trees. Yet even with his loving care the impossible could not be done, and the garden looked what it was—a once beautiful garden of the past.

Into this family the arrival of Sono was received with doubtful joy. It had been hoped that the new arrival would be a boy to carry on the family name, and in time become the honored head of the great clan. But the Japanese are a kindly race and love children, and although the

great kite that had been prepared to fly above the house to announce the joyful news of the birth of a son, was regretfully laid away, no face showed its disappointment. Presents and kindly wishes came from relatives and friends. Matsu was busy from the seventh day of Sono's birth, when after her formal naming, a few friends were invited to eat the festival rice cooked with red beans to denote good fortune, until the thirty-third day, which was the culmination of the festivities. For days after that great event Togo was kept busy carrying the lacquered tray on which was a box of rice, covered with the fusuka, an elaborate piece of brocade, embroidered with the family crest in rose and gold. The little mother had no time these busy days to attend to the household duties, or scarcely give her baby the care she demanded, because if any one had sent a gift, however small, and should happen to be overlooked, it would be an unpardonable insult.

After the great festivity, a quiet, undisturbed life commenced for Sono. In the morning her little dresses, fitted one inside the other, were placed upon the floor and the baby was laid in them, a soft belt attached to the outer garment was tied around the waist, and she was dressed for the day. She passed the time lying on the soft futon staring at the wall, and at the shadows

as they played upon the ceiling. When she was restless, Matsu would take her upon her back and carry her as she worked around the house. Sono had no brothers or sisters to carry her, and did not have the joy that falls to nearly all Japanese children of peeping over the shoulders of an older child as it played the game of bouncing the ball or flying kites, or racing in the temple courtyard.

All the mothers in the neighborhood took an interest in Sono, and her mother was admonished and warned and given much kindly advice as to the safest methods to be employed in bringing up a child. Because of the strict observance of all the superstitions, or in spite of them, Sono came to the fifteenth day of November of the second year of her birth, when all the little girls of her own age with their mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, cousins and aunts, were taken to the temple. It was a great day for Sono. She was again the proud possessor of a new kimona, a bright red one with storks and butterflies in white flying gayly over the crimson surface; and, with her long sleeves, her little lacquered geta, her black hair cut straight across her neck, her rougish eyes flashing and her cheeks rosy from excitement, O Inkyo Sama vowed there would be no prettier baby at the temple.

He, leading Sono by the hand, with the father



***H**E was slowly going to one of those little houses
down where the fishermen lived.*



THE well in the garden.

and mother following and Matsu in the rear, walked down the quiet little street to the temple. Before the temple the full business life of the village could be seen. The mothers and sisters with their babies on their backs; the traders sitting over their charcoal braziers; the hawkers of fish, dried radish, cakes, persimmons, pipes, kites and flags; the coolies with their balanced loads; the priests, the pretty maidens, the staring black-eyed babies, the blind old samisen players, the bird dealers, all were here. The great court had been transformed into a fairy land for children. There was a miniature street of small booths for toys, as no mother would think of attending the fifteenth of November celebration without buying her child a toy.

There were booths for sweetmeats dear to the child heart, sweet rice cakes, biscuits shaped like goblins; there was the candy maker who with a few deft whirls of his little paddle made a warrior bold to the joy of the tiny onlookers. At the booths for toys there was the little mallet of the Great Deity of Kitzuki, who by one stroke of his hammer gives fortune to his worshipers.

There were little drums and big drums, models of those used in the temples; caps like those worn by the Shinto priests; toy shrines, toy models of the sacred bells used by the priestess in her dance before the Gods; little images of

Otafuku whose merry laughter lured the Goddess of the Sun from out her cave of darkness; Shinto priests in full garb of worship, who, when a little string was drawn, clapped their hands in prayer. Hosts of other toys were there, full of delightful meanings to Sono, who had been told all the tales of the Gods by Inkyo Sama. She saw Tenjin, the Deity of beautiful writing, and Uzume, who loves laughter, and the Seven Divinities of good luck, and the God of Longevity, with his head so elongated that the barber must mount the ladder to shave His Majesty. Inkyo Sama found the few rin to buy Hotei, the God of Happiness, and Matsu went into her sleeve and passed something to the toy maker, who handed Sono Ebisu, the God of Markets and Fishermen, with a tai fish under his arm, and Inkyo Sama wanted to buy her Daruma, the disciple of Buddha who sat so long in meditation that his legs were worn off, but Yuki said that he should save his rin, as there was the booth for dolls yet to be seen.

It was not hard to find the dolls, for around them were clustered the little girls who looked with longing eyes at the display of babies for which their motherly arms ached. They were cheap little dolls with only the head real, the body being simply a flat stick covered with a paper kimona, but they were enchanting to the children, with their black, oblique eyes, their

pretty oval faces crowned by most wonderful paper coiffures, and their gay little dresses. When Sono was told to choose one, she could not make up her mind which was the most beautiful, as each one she saw seemed the most perfect, but finally she held tight in her baby hands a gay little woman dressed in a gorgeous red kimona, with blue and golden obi, and her joy was complete.

At last they entered the dim room of the temple; a small offering was made and the consecrated saké in a flat unglazed earthenware cup was given Sono to sip; the priest purified her body by waving over it a sacred wand adorned by strips of paper, and she was declared a Follower of the Law.

When the mysterious ceremony was concluded they went again to the temple court which was thronged with laughing children, playing their games while watched by fond parents who took the occasion to stop and have a friendly chat with a neighbor. Afterwards, in the afternoon, calls were made upon friends, who each gave Sono some little gift, and in the evening she was taken home a happy, tired child and an acknowledged member of the faith of her fathers.

CHAPTER III

As Sono became older she followed Inkyo Sama as he worked in the garden, she chattering, he answering and explaining to her with infinite patience the meaning of the rocks, the trees and the myths and legends connected with them. He knew all the stories and traditions and mystery tales of Old Japan, and was never tired of telling them to eager Sono, who believed them all and to whom they never grew old through repetition.

Inkyo Sama loved each stone and flower and he was training Sono to love them, to see beauty in each rock and tree, the buds and blossoms. He was little by little opening for her the Book of Nature and teaching her to read therein. As he was arranging the great flat stones in the pathway, he would call her attention to a curious marking or to a shape that held a particular interest for him.

"See, little flower," would say this dear old dreamer, who seemed to be always looking out on the sea of life and discerning in the blue expanse, islands which other eyes could not perceive. "See, little one, stones have character. Did

not Buddha say, 'Verily, even plants and trees, rocks and stones, all shall enter Nirvana?' There are many kinds of stones, stones that have souls like people, like Sono and Inkyo Sama. And there are stones that are Gods, like the Woman's Stone in the Temple of Hachiman to which women pray, and the Wealth-giving Stone at Enoshima to which all who desire to enter the Gate of Gold make pilgrimage. And there are the Nodding Stones which bowed before the Monk Daita when he preached to them the word of our Blessed Buddha. And once in a far away time, our Emperor O Jin, being augustly intoxicated, smote with his august staff a great stone in the middle of the road, and it rose and ran away. So you see stones have life, and it is necessary to open wide your eyes to the beauties of this wonderful world, because the Gods reveal to us only what we can understand. See," and he would hold her little hand within his and softly caress the gray stone which for the moment held his interest, "see, you can touch these wonderful things, name them, but their secret, the secret of their color, their strength, is held close within their bosoms. But the Wisdom of Buddha knows all things, and he that attains it will know the language of the flowers and the birds and the rocks. We understand now the things with desire such as men and animals, but if we follow

the Good Law, perhaps in another life we will understand the things without desire such as trees and stones, the flowers and the moss. But remember, we must follow the Law, the Law of the Most Blessed which says that we must not cause sorrow even to a bud or a blossom."

Sono did not understand much of the philosophizing of her grandfather, but she followed him from place to place, watching him as he touched with loving fingers the heavily mossed rocks, or the fantastic basins hollowed out of stone for the holding of water, or the great stone lamps green with age. They would pass to the miniature hills with old trees, some scarcely two feet high upon them, and the long slopes of green, shadowed by flowering shrubs, like river banks rising from strips of sand, smooth as a surface of silk imitating the wanderings of a hidden brook. Sono learned that these sanded places must not be walked upon as they were far too beautiful to be desecrated by her footprints, and caused In-kyo Sama much labor to keep them in their silky smoothness.

Farther on was a miniature lake fringed with iris, and on an island in the center rose a tiny mountain and dwarf pine and peach trees. In the waters rose the lotus leaf, and they would kneel upon the flat stones beside the water's edge and note every phase of the growth of the plant,

from the first unrolling of the leaf to the fall of the last petal. On rainy days Inkyo Sama would bring the great umbrella and, sheltered beneath it, he and Sono would watch the beautiful plant, whose great cup-shaped leaf, swaying high above the water, caught the rain and held it a moment, then bent down gracefully to the pond and emptied its sparkling cargo with a loud splash.

Sono would sit patiently by the lake to watch for the fine bronze frog Tono-san-Gaeru, who was called after the famous Daimyo who left behind him a memory of great splendor. There were other frogs and fish that dwelt in the lotus pond, and in the tree near by was the little frog that foretold the coming of a storm. Sono knew them all and had names for them all. They were her friends and playmates, and with dragon flies and butterflies, the wild doves and crows, she was never lonely within the high stone walls that encircled her little world.

When she was naughty and disobedient she was threatened with the owl who came to take little children away who do not obey their parents. She could hear him say quite plainly, "Thou! Must I enter slowly—enter slowly—enter slowly!"

Before the well were two kitsune—foxes chiseled in gray stone, with long narrow, sinister eyes—servants of the Rice God. Sono was afraid

of the Fox Gods, they brought evil upon men and women. Inkyo Sama said that when Visu was lost in the forest he followed a fox that crossed his path many times, and finally he came out to a dell where two beautiful maidens were sitting playing "Go." And they smiled at him and so enchanted him that he stopped to watch their game, and when at last they disappeared and he returned to his home, he found that his people had been gone to the Land of Shadows for six generations. His children's children's children had almost forgotten his very name. So Sono learned a Sutra of the Good Law to recite if she ever met a live fox, knowing that he hated the Good Law and would pass far away in order not to hear the sacred words.

A mountain stream tumbled along by the back garden wall over which had been erected a quaint, high-arched bridge. Its banks were overhung with bamboos and the rocks were covered with lavender iris and ferns and ornamental grasses. Just outside the garden its stream was used to turn a wooden water wheel which worked the huge hammer for pounding and cleaning rice.

These antique garden walls within which Sono passed her childhood days, seemed to shut out even the murmur of the village life. There was nothing to disturb the silence but the voices of birds or the splash of a diving frog, or the low,


quiet tones of her grandfather as he told her tales of the fairies who lived in the trees and in the hearts of flowers, or of the Tengu who lived in the forests; of the Gods who reigned in the olden time or the warriors of other days.

There was a charm in the very air, a sense of something not seen but sweet all about them. The summer light as it filtered down through the foliage of the trees and touched the Buddha of stone, or the gray kitsune sitting so motionless beside the well, seemed to thrill them with a living spirit. It was a garden of enchantment, and Sono, with the dear old man whose life was like his own sheltered lake, learned many of life's lessons in the myths and legends of this land haunted by the Gods.

CHAPTER IV

On the day that Sono was five years old, the great event of her life came to her. A little farther down the street on which lived the family of Tokuwara was the home of a great friend of Inkyo Sama, O Baku San, the artist. Once every three months these two old dreamers would go to the monastery on the mountain to visit their mutual friend, the abbot of that isolated temple.

Inkyo Sama had planned long in advance that at the time of the cherry blossoms, Sono should accompany them to view the long avenue of trees filled with the delicate bloom, for which the gardens of the monastery were famous. For days before the great event Sono went around with a smile on her lips and with dancing steps, because Inkyo Sama had confided the delightful secret to her, and they were only waiting for an auspicious time to broach the subject to the real rulers of her destiny, the mother and Matsu. When the eventful day arrived great was the distress of Sono and Inkyo Sama, because the Honorable Little Mother said that the distance was far too long for childish feet. Sono stood pa-



tiently, alternate hope and fear in her heart as arguments were brought forth in favor of the journey by Inkyo Sama, or against it by the careful mother. Finally Inkyo Sama said, "She will not tire, O Yuki San. She will walk upon her honorable feet until we pass the town, then I will carry her upon my back." He begged so hard that at last the cautious women were quite persuaded, and happy Sono was dressed in her gay little kimona with the storks and birds upon it, and she clattered along upon her new geta, holding fast to Inkyo Sama's hand until they reached the home of the artist. At the door of the house Inkyo Sama clapped his hands three times, and soon a shojii was thrown back and an old servant greeted them.

"Is thy master in?" inquired Inkyo Sama.

"My Honorable Master is in his workroom," replied the woman, drawing in her breath with that sibilant sound that is the sign of respect, and touching her head to the mat in front of her.

"We will go to him," said Inkyo Sama, and they turned and went to a small two-roomed house built in a secluded corner of the garden. He dropped his clogs, slid the shojii back softly and entered a room where an old man was bending over a vase he was holding in his hand. The man was so intent upon his work that he did not hear the entrance of his visitors, and Inkyo

Sama, after watching him for a few moments, said, "The Gods work with them who work."

The old man looked up and a smile broke over his wrinkled face. He hastily put down the vase and saluted Inkyo Sama. They knelt facing each other and solemnly touched their heads to the floor with all the elaborate courtesy of old-time gentlemen, who know the art of associating with friends. However long the acquaintance, they treat each other with respect and no familiarity. Then Sono was greeted, and she knelt on the mat, and clasping her little hands in front of her touched her head to the floor three times with all the dignity she had seen displayed by the two old men.

The friends sat back upon their mats and soon nothing could be heard but their droning voices as they discussed the village news, the steaming of the kettle upon the hibachi or the rat-tat-tat of the pipes against the bamboo ash receivers. Sono tried to sit still, but she moved restlessly from time to time, and finally O Baku San noticed the patience of the little body that tried so hard to be polite and listen to words that were meaningless to her and he said, "Is it hard to sit still, little one, and listen to two old men? Well, we will let you be the housewife and make the tea," and he handed Sono the tea caddy and the little porcelain tea pot, and

Sono became very important at once, making the tea as she had seen her mother do it, and pouring it into the cups. When she slid the little cups across the matting to her guests, as they called themselves, she touched her head in front of each of them and was as formal as if she were serving distinguished guests within her home. The old men smiled at her gravity, then resumed their conversation. When the local gossip had been thoroughly discussed, Inkyo Sama reached over and took the vase that the artist had been regarding so carefully when they entered.

"What have we here?" he inquired; then upon closer inspection he said, "Ah, it is the vase upon which you have been working for so many weeks. It is very beautiful."

He turned it and handled it with loving care, and as he was admiring the delicate work, an old lady entered. After the salutations she inquired after the health of each individual member of the family, not even forgetting the servants. Sono made fresh tea and gave her, enjoying immensely the feeling of being hostess. The old lady patted the little hand that proffered her the cup, chatted with her a moment, then as she noticed Inkyo Sama examining the vase, she said, "You are looking at that vase. It is because of that foolish piece of silver that my Honorable Husband and I are not good friends to-day."

Her kindly laugh belied her words, and as her husband looked at her a twinkle came into his eyes.

"It is the hen that tells the cock to crow," he said softly.

"Ah, you can laugh," said the old lady. "But I will ask O Inkyo Sama if he does not think you are getting foolish in your old age."

"Yes," replied the artist, "we have a judge now; we will let the case be arbitrated."

"What is the trouble?" inquired Inkyo Sama.

"It is this," began the old lady with a little sharpness in her soft voice. "Inro the great merchant was here, and he wanted to buy that vase, and he offered much more than it was worth; but my Honorable Husband, whom I have said is bewitched by a fox, would not sell it to him. Can you understand it? And we need the yen. We must have new tatami on the floor, the shojiis must be repapered, and the coverings for the mats——"

"Never mind telling all we need," interrupted O Baku San. "O Inkyo Sama understands that the Spring has come, and according to the woman world the house must be renewed and made quite impossible to live in for a time."

"But why did you not sell the vase if you needed the money?" inquired Inkyo Sama.

The artist puffed at his pipe for a few mo-

ments without answering the question, then, knocking the ashes out into the holder, said shortly, "I could not."

"You could not," said the wife quickly. "Why couldn't you? What was there to hinder? Here was the vase, there was the merchant sitting where O Inkyo Sama is sitting now, and he offered you the money in good paper bills. I saw him do it as I was serving the tea, and you refused it. Did you ever hear of such nonsense, now when we need new tatami, and the sho-jiis——"

"Yes—yes—we understand," said the artist, putting his hand towards her as if to stop the flow of words upon a subject that he had heard many times. "We understand, your advice is always good, but——"

"You did not ask my advice," interrupted Aba Sama, "and I think it just as well. What is the use of asking counsel if you do not mean to follow it, for the physic's use lies in the drinking of it, not in the buying."

The men laughed and Inkyo Sama looked at his friend with a little wrinkle of perplexity between his questioning eyes.

"Why did you not sell the vase?" he inquired softly.

"Because I could not," answered the artist. "He did not understand the work. It meant

nothing to him except that it would cost him many yen and therefore must be valuable. It requires the eye and the knowledge of an artist to appreciate the work of an artist. I could not sell it to him."

"Now, do you see how impractical he is?" demanded Aba Sama, with a sharp tone in her voice that caused Sono to look at her a little fearfully, for when she heard that tone from her mother she, Sono, had generally been walking in forbidden paths. The old lady continued: "One might just as well try to drown a frog by pouring water in its face as to try to argue with my husband. I have talked and talked and talked——"

The husband laughed. "O Inkyo Sama is sure of that," he said. "He does not need more proof that you can talk—and talk—and talk——"

They all laughed and Sono looked relieved as she saw no one was being reprimanded. She sat back again upon the mat and amused herself by watching the grotesque figures the waving boughs of a tree made upon the paper shojiis.

Aba Sama returned to the subject close to her heart. "But if he had the money, the money we need now, why should you care?" she asked. "It must be sold to some one."

The old man replied patiently, "I have told thee before and thou didst not understand, but

I think O Inkyo Sama will understand. I could not sell it to the merchant. He did not see the days and weeks and months of thought and labor I had put into the vase. He saw only the cost of the thing to himself, and Iyesau said, 'If we do not think while using things of the time and effort required to make them—then our lack of consideration puts us on a level with the beasts.' I could not sell him my beautiful vase," and he touched softly its shining surface.

He was quiet a moment, then he continued, "Every artist has an art which is an inheritance from artists innumerable. His fingers are guided in the picture he makes of a flying stork, or the mist around the mountain or the sunrise on the blue waters of the sea—he does not do the work alone. Generations of skilled workmen have given my hand its cunning and live again in my art. I could not sell the spirits of those who have gone before, I could not sell my soul to him who does not understand. It would not be right to them who have left me their hard-won knowledge."

Aba Sama laughed softly. "Hear him—hear him. Our Honorable Ancestors are to be respected, but they do not buy matting nor papers for the shojii—" Then she turned to her husband, "Why do you not make another like it?" she demanded.

"An artist is not a manufacturer," he replied. "And we can not make the same thing twice. Another vase, even if I attempted to copy this one exactly would not be the same, because my thoughts, my visions would be different, the thing, myself, that I put within the work would not be the same to-morrow as it is to-day, but—" and the old man put down the vase with a little shamefaced laugh. "I presume you are right, my honorable one. Yes, the Goddess of Art enters through the windows of the senses, she finds her way into the very soul of man and makes for herself a home there, and—and the true artist can not sell his treasures to those whom misery makes rich and whose wealth is the money of tears."

Inkyo Sama smiled at him sympathetically. "I see thou wilt never enter the Gates of the Mountain of Wealth, O Baku San," he said softly.

There was the sound of a boyish laugh and Sono sat up very straight, as she had grown tired of listening to strange talk that she did not understand, though being a polite little girl she had tried to sit quietly beside her grandfather. A boy entered the room with a rush and a call which was something that she distinctly understood. The artist drew the boy to his side.

"This is our grandson, O Inkyo Sama, the only

child of our son who is no more. He has come to live with us."

It was a very pretty boy at whom Sono stared, a boy about eight years of age. They looked at each other solemnly as children will, then the grandmother said, "You children run out and play," and as Sono rose quickly Inkyo Sama put out his hand and detained her.

"No, Aba Sama," he said. "I have come to see if O Baku Sama will go with me to the temple. The cherry trees are out, and I would like to spend the day with our friend the abbot in his Garden of the Pleasure of Peace."

The artist rose quickly, his face alight with joy at the thought of a day with his friends. The wife laughed.

"There. I didn't know he could move so quickly," she said. "If I had asked him to get the kettle for the tea, he would have groaned and moved with difficulty, remembering that he was old and that the weakness had come to his honorable legs. But to go to the temple, he will walk with you up the steep mountain side, and climb those many steps, and he will not know that he has honorable legs."

She laughed again and both of the men joined her in her merriment.

"But," said O Baku Sama, "think of the pleasure of going to the temple and sitting on that

beautiful veranda—drinking the sun-dried tea mixed with the flowers of jasmine. To talk with O Inkyo Sama and with the Honorable Abbot of the beauties of the religion of our Blessed Buddha, to learn the Way of the Gods from one who has made its study his life work—to hear O Inkyo Sama tell of his pilgrimage which has reflected honor upon all our countryside—I ask what can be more wonderful?” and the old artist looked at his wife as if no reply could be expected other than an immediate assent to the plan for the day.

But Inkyo Sama replied for her. “Yes,” he said. “To be chained by the feet with friends is better than walking in a garden with strangers. It is good for the three of us to meet.”

“Which you have done these many years,” said Aba Sama. “Every three months you come and take my husband away from his work, and you go up to that temple, not to worship the Gods, but to talk. And you always have an excuse. This time it is the cherry trees, the last time it was the maples, the next time it will be the lotus blossoms or the peonies. There is always some beauty there that causes you two foolish children to climb the mountain path.” She shook her finger at Inkyo Sama, but there was a smile in her kindly eyes.

“You take my husband away from his work—

useful work," and she tried to look severe at the men whom she could see were impatient at the delay.

The artist paused in the doorway, and turning, said, "We should take pains to encourage the beautiful, for the useful encourages itself. Let me give one day to beauty."

Aba Sama said as Inkyo Sama rose, "Will you leave O Sono San with me?"

Sono's little face was tragic for a moment. Suppose, oh *suppose* Inkyo Sama should leave her instead of taking her to see the cherry trees as he had promised. She hardly breathed, waiting for his reply. The old man looked embarrassed, as if he did not like to refuse the hospitable invitation, and was afraid that Aba Sama, like his women folk, would feel that the walk was too long for Sono. Then he had a happy thought.

"Why can we not take both the children, and let them see the cherry trees? I want Sono to see Jizo and put a stone at his feet."

Sono's face cleared and the happy smile came again to her half pouting lips. The little boy nestled up against his grandmother and said, with pleading voice, "Please, Aba Sama, please."

She looked down at him and caressed his dark head.

"It is far, thou canst not walk over the rough road."

The boy flushed. "I am a man now and can walk anywhere my grandfather can walk," he said with a pout.

The old people laughed.

"Let him come," said Inkyo Sama. "It will be a day to be remembered."

The old lady looked at the pleading eyes of her grandson and said with a smile, "The child brought up by its grandmother will be worth little." Then she patted the face raised to hers. "You will be spoiled and grow up to be just as foolish as O Inkyo Sama and your honorable grandfather, but—it will take you both away for the day, and I have many things to do that can better be done without men in the house. Come, I will get you the new hakama and you shall take your second best geta, the stones will spoil your best."

Sono was left with her grandfather, and they sat quietly for a time, then Sono leaned over to Inkyo Sama and whispered, "Where did he get all the pretty things, O Inkyo Sama?" indicating with a wave of her hand the vases and boxes and half finished works that were placed against the walls of the room or lying in careless confusion on the tatami.

Inkyo Sama replied, "O Baku Sama, Sono, is

an artist, one of those rare artistic souls who express their love for their beautiful country, its landscapes, its flowering trees, its curving roofs, its tales and legends, in art—in his carvings upon ivory and chasing of silver. He loves the beautiful things of this world and he tries to make us see them through his eyes. He is a true artist, is our O Baku Sama, and it is a great honor to our village that he lives with us, and—and—to me that I am his friend.”

They wandered around the room, looking at the carvings, Inkyo Sama admiring, criticizing, showing Sono the beauties he discovered, until the shojii opened and the artist dressed in his haorii and Kané in his new hakama entered. Sono looked at Kané critically and it was plain to be seen that the boy was very proud of his new hakama, as it was his first, and showed that he had left the small boy stage of life and donned man's attire.

After a series of bowings and polite phrases, good-by was said to the hostess, who accompanied them to the door, and they left the house and started up the winding street.

CHAPTER V

They went slowly up the Lane of the Ag Woman and passed into the Street of the Sto River, where there were little shops that the children want to linger. Then they turned in the long street Everlasting which led them beyond the limits of the village. There Ink Sama knelt down and Sono climbed to her place on his back, snuggling under his comfortable haorii. They passed tea houses which were full with camellias, azaleas, magnolia and cherry trees, and where the young leaves of the maple and the andromeda were as bright as any flowers. They passed pretty village maidens coming down from the mountain with great bundles of firewood on their backs, and saw bare limbed peasants, tanned by the wind and the sun, working on their tiny plots of land; mothers with babies on their backs or toddling along upon their backs greeted them with a respectful "O Hayo" as they passed.

They stopped on a bridge over a stream where the waters played hushed rhapsodies among the reeds and grasses. Sono, leaning over her grandfather's shoulder, watched the brook as it turned



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THEY passed tea houses.



THEY stopped on a bridge over a stream where the waters played hushed rhapsodies.

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bled over the mossy rocks. She gave a little chuckle, "Listen, O Inkyo Sama," she whispered, "the water is laughing. Listen."

"Yes," said Inkyo Sama. "The spirit of the brook is laughing for joy. It knows that Spring is here, the time of purification with cleansing rains and bounding streams, and white mist clinging to field and hedgerow, so that when her veil is drawn we see a land that makes us glad."

They were quiet peering into the dancing wavelets. The old man said in a low voice, "Listen to its murmur—it hears the young grass whisper the splendor of its coming green, and the young buds rustling within their brown sheaths, waiting for the day to come when they will break their prison bars."

They went between tiny fields sprinkled with white arrows of prayer or fenced around with magic fences built of bamboo rods and fringed with prayers on long white strips of paper. Within the sacred place no blight might enter, no scorching sun to kill the young root nor hungry birds to do them evil.

As they passed upwards they came to the groves of pine and fir trees which clothed the hill-sides, and clinging azaleas carpeted rocks and precipices to the very brink of the tumbling water-falls that came rushing down the mountain sides. They walked slowly or stopped to admire

a view or watch a robin tilted on a swaying bow as he made his morning toilet. The air was filled with the caress of the Spring bringing to the loiterers the perfume of freshly turned soil and the soft breath of flowers.

They turned from the main highway and came to a long flight of stone steps, carpeted in spots with soft moss and covered in the corners with ferns. It led to a gray wall, over whose top could be seen the curving roofs of a temple. The faint sound of many little bells came to them, as the wind swayed them to and fro in their hiding places under the eaves and caused them to sing a little song of gladness.

As they came to the entrance Inkyo Sama sat down and Sono crept from her place beneath his haorii. They sat on the top step and looked at the scene before them. There stretched the crests of the hills, while farther away were the plains and valleys, the dark groves of fir and pine, the cultivated fields, glistening sheets of water, silvery rivers winding across the landscape towards the sea, hamlets and towns with their thatched roofs, all seeming to blend and make a perfect picture. Farther away was the placid ocean dotted here and there by the sails of junks, gold colored by the sun.

They were quiet for a time looking at the beautiful scene, then Inkyo Sama said in a low voice,

“The man of knowledge finds pleasure in the sea; the man of virtue finds pleasure in the mountains. For the man of knowledge is restless and the man of virtue is calm, and each finds pleasure in that part of nature which resembles himself.” He was silent, then he continued, “As a youth, with youth’s desires and restlessness, I loved the sea; as a man, I love the mountains.”

They entered the great gateway of the temple and stopped with a sigh of delight. It was a sight that caused one to pause in sheer wonder at its beauty. There was the great double line of cherry trees, a glorious burst of bloom veiling every twig and branch in a delicate mist, as if fleeciest masses of cloud had floated down from the sky to rest within the garden. There were no leaves, only one great filmy mist of flowers, and the ground beneath and the path before them was white with the perfumed snow of fallen petals.

Sono ran ahead and with a pretty little gesture filled her hands with the white flowers and threw them into the air.

“Look, O Inkyo Sama, look. They are like snow or white butterflies. Look,” and she filled again and again her tiny hands and threw the petals into the air. As the men were watching her pretty face raised to the shower of perfume, an old man dressed in the yellow robes of a Buddhist

priest came from the temple. His face was furrowed like Nature's face in springtime, but they were kindly furrows that gave promise of a hidden crop of sweetness. He bowed low before his friends.

"I have been waiting for you," he said. "I knew the flowers would not go without bringing you to admire them. Without you, for me they would have lost half their beauty."

He led them past the galleries connecting the temple with his own apartments. They passed long white corridors laid with soft mats, to his chamber where the woodwork stood in natural grain like watered silk, except when relieved here and there by a gleam of lacquer. He opened a shoji and placed mats where from one side the feast of cherry trees could be seen, and from another view, his guests could watch the dark reflection of a pine tree in the silvery waters of a little lake.

He called a servant who placed between them the brazen hibachi whose handles were heads of Buddhist lions, and on which was the iron kettle with its symbolical figures of dragons and clouds. Tea was poured into fine porcelain cups with holders of bronze shaped like the sacred lotus flower, and within an old gold-lacquered box were pipes and all things needful for the quieting smoke in which all Japan takes its pleasure.

They sat down and exchanged the formal courtesies that are so charming among the older generation, the kindly queries regarding family, business, friends. Then, when the conventionalities were all observed, O Inkyo Sama sighed as he settled back on his mat, and, watching the blue smoke as it rose in tiny spirals from his pipe, said, "Ah, my friend, thou art to be envied. The Garden of Amida in the Paradise of the West can not be more restful, and there is no higher happiness than rest. You can here shut the gates of the world."

"Yes," replied the priest, after a moment's silence. "One has time for visions behind these guarding walls, but for the most of the world it would not speak with the same voice it uses to thee and me. They do not care for silence or peace. They let slip the ideal for what they call the real, and their golden dreams vanish while they clutch at phantoms. They speed along life's pathway, counting to the full the sixty minutes to the hour, yet the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

"Ah," said Inkyo Sama, "To escape sorrow men rush into sorrow, from desire of pleasure they blindly slay their happiness although they are eager for the happiness so close to their hand—they are longing for something that will satisfy their hungering souls."

The old priest said in a low voice, "They search and search to drown the sorrows of their souls and then they come to the Gods. It is the only path which leads them away from themselves and the love of life." He was quiet for a time, then he went on in the soft voice of the priest used to the low tones of sacred precincts.

"Love of life is but a delusion after all. He who dreads to die is like a child who has lost his way and can not find his home. It is like the story of Lady Li who when given in marriage to the Duke of Chin wept until her sleeve was drenched in tears. But when she came to the royal residence and lived with the Duke in his beautiful palace, she repented of having wept. When we are no more will we not repent of having clung to life?"

He smoked in silence, then he said, "Why should men love the body? It is no better than a thing of wood, and what should avail its hatred or its unkindness. It feels no love when I guard it, no hate when vultures devour it, then why should men love it. Yet we are angered when it is treated with scorn, delighted when it is honored, but if it has no knowledge, to what end is our toil? Our real necessities are but three, clothing, food, shelter, and they exist only for making the body a fit vehicle for the soul in its journey to Nirvana."



THERE stretched the cultivated fields,
glistening sheets of water.



KAGA, the fisherman.

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The old priest would have gone on philosophizing for the rest of the day perhaps, but he was interrupted by a prolonged, weary yawn from tired Sono. The men had forgotten the children, as they sat patiently upon their mats. At first Sono was interested in looking around the room, out of the open shojiis at the trees and flowers; then she studied the faces of the men opposite her. She watched the fine little lines come around the eyes of the priest as he laughed, lines the same as came to her grandfather's face when he was pleased. She knew him so well and had watched the loved face so much that she could tell by the expression of his eyes when some thing pleased him, long before the chuckles came to his lips. But even the interest she took in the faces of the old men became tiring at last, and she did not have within her sleeves a piece of string with which to play, like Kané, who had found a long cord and was busily employed in making fantastic nooses with it.

When the involuntary little yawn came from Sono, the men turned and regarded her, Inkyo Sama with a reproachful eye. Sono blushed, and snuggled up against him, hiding her hot little face against his sleeve to cover her chagrin. The priest looked at the children over his big horn-rimmed glasses.

"Now who have we here? I am not used to

entertaining children. We must have cakes for them." He clapped his hands and when the servant entered, he said, "What have we for young people?"

The servant smiled at the children and left the room. The old priest held out his hands to the children who came to him, unable to resist his kindly smile. He held them to him for a moment, then bade them sit down in front of him.

"Two children," he said. "Two new lives to learn the Noble Eight Fold Path." He took the hand of Kané within his own.

"Look at thy hand," he said, "with its tapering fingers of unequal length which can grasp so roughly or gather gently the flowers from the garden, or touch lovingly the hand of thy grandfather. Think thee that any amount of wisdom could better it in any way? Look, we will learn some of the virtues from the fingers. See," touching each finger as he spoke, "this first finger is for benevolence and filial obedience, the middle finger for propriety and conjugal happiness, the third finger for righteousness and loyalty, the little finger for wisdom and brotherly affection, the thumb for sincerity and fidelity to companions. With the five you can grasp what you will. All the world is yours, a precious treasure, but if you are a little selfish, if you seek only your own happiness, you break off the fingers

one by one. Disobedience breaks the first," and he bent the finger down. "Conjugal discord the second, disloyalty breaks the third, strife with brothers and sisters the fourth, falseness towards others the thumb, and see? Your hand is helpless. It is only a club. It can not take or hold a thing. But if your hands are whole, if you have obeyed the Law and you join them together thusly," and he joined the child's two hands in the position taken by the Buddhist monks," you show love between yourself and others. You must have love for all about you, the flowers, the trees, the moss, the stones, and then you will have love for man. Life without love is like a bud that lies sheathed in its brown armor, until the rains quench its thirst and the sun warms its heart when it bursts forth in all its beauty to gladden the world. Remember, my boy, the world can not make you glad; you must gladden the world. You must hear the wretched when they cry, be a lamp for those that need a lamp, a bed for those that need a bed. That is the only road to happiness; otherwise you will ever be seeking rest and never finding it."

Then he turned to Sono. "The woman child must also learn the Way. What is the way of the flower? Color—perfume. Of the willow? Greenness—grace. But what is the only way for woman? Obedience—submission—renunciation.

Kané would have continued indefinitely telling her the tales told him by his friend the fisherman, as he delighted in the wondering look in her black eyes and was proud of the sensation he was making, but the cat caught his eye again, and he remembered his distaste for cats.

"There's that cat again. Only the cats and the snake wept not at the death of Buddha, and they will never enter the Temple of Bliss. Grandfather says so. Let's throw the cat over the wall."

The cat evidently recognized its enemy and his designs were instinctively felt, consequently it went over the wall of its own accord before the cruel little hands could grasp it. Kané looked at it disdainfully.

"There the old thing goes," he said scornfully. "I wish there was a dog here. I like dogs. Grandfather says 'feed a dog for three days and he will remember your kindness for three years, feed a cat for three years and she will forget your kindness in three days.' Oh!"—and he started in pursuit of a brilliant butterfly. They both joined in the chant.

"Butterfly, butterfly, light upon the na-leaf, pray
Or if na-leaf tempt you not
On my hand alight and sway.
Hand and na-leaf both are nigh
Light upon one, butterfly."

As they could not persuade the butterfly to come to them even with the pretty song, the boy produced from the inexhaustible resources of his sleeve a little ball, and the ball song could be faintly heard by the old men, as the children kept the ball bounding in the air, singing the verses that accompany the game.

After a time Sono became tired of the game of ball, and finding a piece of wood by the side of the path, its possibilities as the foundation of a doll became immediately apparent. She knelt down upon the path and searching in her sleeve found the paper handkerchief which careful Yuki had provided, and proceeded to improvise a kimona. Kané's sleeve produced a string and another kerchief and soon Sono's maternal little heart was satisfied as she walked up and down the path crooning the cradle song of the hare to the improvised baby carried so carefully in her arms.

The old priest watched the children at their play, and a smile came over his wrinkled face. "What a beautiful thing is a child," he said. "They come to us from the Gods, because all that is beautiful is from them, is their gift to us. Hear their voices, as clear and sweet as the tinkling of the temple bells."

He watched them a moment in silence, then he said: "That little woman child is the central type and symbol of the triumph of love and beauty

over death. From her laughing eyes a thousand women gone before look out once more on Spring. She is like a flower, a butterfly in the morning sunlight." He watched her, a puzzled look in his eyes.

"What is she doing, O Inkyo Sama?" he asked.

Inkyo Sama looked at Sono as she changed the doll from one arm to the other, then began again her little lullaby, and he laughed. "Sono is playing that she is a mother, and that—whatever it is within her arms—is her baby." He looked at her for a moment and a soft look came into his eyes. "My little girl is a true woman, a true mother. She is only happy when she has a doll within her arms."

A light came to the old priest's face and he turned to Inkyo Sama with an eager note in his old voice. "Has she no doll, O Inkyo Sama?" he asked.

Inkyo Sama shook his head sadly. "That is my sorrow," he said. "We can not give Sono the pretty things dear to the heart of children. She has a doll bought in the temple fair, but it is one that costs but a few rin. She loves it, but I am sure she grieves when she sees the dolls of other little girls. At the time of the Feast of the Dolls she looks with longing eyes at the toy shops—but—we feel that we must not

buy toys when rice is needed," and the old man sighed.

The priest chuckled softly and rose. "I will make her happy," he said. "I have a most wonderful doll that was left here by a very rich lady when she made a pilgrimage to Jizo with her young child who was ill. She has never sent for it and doubtless has forgotten it. It makes no heart happy lying in the dark."

He went hurriedly from the room and soon returned with a most gorgeous doll held awkwardly in his arms. It was as big as a young baby, and most beautifully dressed in embroidered robes, satin obi and lacquered geta, and its tiny face seemed almost alive in its perfection. The old priest beamed in the thought of the joy he was able to give the child of his dearest friend.

"Look, it is a shame that it gives no pleasure. We will place it here and call the children in to have some refreshment." The old man placed the doll upon a mat and arranged a small table at its back so that it should not fall. The three old men stood around the doll, one arranging the kimona so that it should lie in graceful folds, another bringing a little stand, which he placed in front of her, while the artist filled a bowl with rice and poured tea into a tiny cup, arranging the table as if she were an invited guest. They were as happy as children planning their surprise.

When all was done to their satisfaction the priest stepped to the shojii and called Kané and Sono. They came running in, and when Sono saw the doll she stopped still, her eyes growing bigger and bigger. She moved towards it slowly, fascinated, as if drawn by an invisible force. When she was opposite it, she looked at it for a long moment, then she turned to her grandfather.

"O Inkyo Sama—O Inkyo Sama—who—who—where did it come from?"

The watching men were delighted, and smiles played over their happy faces. The priest stepped forward. "It is for thee, O Sono San," he said.

"For me? For me?" she repeated in an awe struck voice.

"It is for thee, little one, it is thine own," he said.

The little girl did not move towards it, she could not believe the beautiful toy opposite was for her.

"Take it in thine arms, O Sono San. It is thine," said the priest. Sono stepped towards it, then turned to her grandfather, a questioning look in her eyes. He assured her by saying, "Take it, Sono, the Honorable Abbot has given it to thee." The little girl gave a cry of delight and the doll was clasped in her eager arms. She held it close against her breast, then she held it

before her to look at it. Her face was radiant. She turned again to her grandfather.

"Is it really my own, O Inkyo Sama, my own, *own* baby?" she inquired breathlessly, it being almost impossible for her to believe the incredible joy that had come to her.

The old men laughed at the tones of her voice.

"It is thine, Sono," answered Inkyo Sama. Thou must thank the Honorable Abbot for the beautiful present."

Instantly the little figure knelt down and the black head touched the mat, but the trembling lips could hardly murmur the "I thank you Most Honorable Abbot, oh, I thank you."

"I am glad to see thy happiness, O Sono San," said the priest. "You will bring her up to be a dutiful daughter, like yourself, and she will always obey her mother. Now rise and we will eat."

Sono took the doll in her arms and even the cakes and sweets did not tempt her. She could only look at this most beautiful thing she had ever seen, examine its coiffure, its gown, its obi. Kané was bored at the whole proceeding and eyed the doll scornfully when Sono held it to him for his inspection.

"Is it not wonderful, Kané?" she asked. "The most wonderful doll in the world?"

"Bah," said Kané, and he looked at it coldly.

"It's nothing but a doll. It doesn't live. I'd rather have a live frog."

"Oh, but dolls *do* live, if you love them enough," said happy Sono, and if dolls could be brought to life by adoration, surely this toy of porcelain and silk had a chance for life.

After luncheon the children were taken into an inner room and told to lie down upon the soft tatami and sleep, but both of the children were too excited to obey. As soon as the priest left the room Kané whispered to Sono.

"We can sleep at home. Let's go into the garden again."

Obedient Sono, the doll in her arms, followed him as he stole quietly into the garden. From the garden they wandered to the entrance of the temple and Kané was occupied in throwing little paper pellets at the fierce looking Ni-O, the guardians of the temple, when the old men appeared in the doorway. When the priest saw Kané's play, he came forward hurriedly.

"Shame, shame, O Kané San," he said with a shocked voice. "Thou must not abuse the guardians of the temple."

"But," said the boy, "others have thrown things at them," and he pointed to the tiny pellets of white paper dotted over the figures.

"Yes," answered the priest, "but they did it in prayer. You see some one was in trouble and

he made a prayer and with it a little paper ball and threw it at the Ni-O, and if it remained he believed that his prayer would be answered. Thou art doing it in play, which is not respectful to the Gods."

The boy looked ashamed for a moment then said with boyish bravado.

"I think it silly to believe that because the paper sticks the prayer will be answered."

"No, no," said the priest. All prayers are prayers leading to the Gods. People in their blindness believe many things, but it is the same common craving in the heart. When a man cries out, to what name it matters not, for something bigger and stronger than himself to help him, the Gods stretch out their hands in tenderness and answer to the call. Men must raise an altar even if it is to an unknown god. Some people, the common ignorant people are only able to appreciate the god envelope, for the God himself is something they can not understand, although they blindly look for him. They believe the Ni-O can really answer their prayers. They, in their earnestness, have ascended the steps of the temple, although they have not reached the inner sanctuary, and we must not take away their belief, because once having surrendered it, it is impossible to regain it. As soon as it is shattered, it is like a glass whose fragments cannot again

be reunited except by being cast into the brazier and refashioned."

Inkyo Sama took Kané by the hand and said softly, "The Honorable Abbot has spoken truly, O Kané San. Thou must not show disrespect to any God. Each idol shaped by faith remains the shell of a truth, and even the shell itself, for aught we know, may hold a power divine, and as the peasant believes truly answer prayer. Any belief that makes men kindly and good is worthy of respect."

The old priest looked at the row of glistening Gods in the temple and said softly, half to himself, "Altars built to other names than thine, can have steps leading to the skies. We fix our common gaze each on a different star—but through all we see the same light. No, we must not take away their Gods, it is like putting out the lights of the world and compelling the people to walk in darkness."

Kané followed the eye of the priest and looked into the open doorway of the temple at the Gods and then into the face of the old man. "But why are there so many Gods?" he asked.

"Ah, the young would know the *Why*," said the priest. "It is a question that many have asked before thee, my son. Countless the Buddhas are, yet there is truly only one Buddha; the many are forms only. Each of us contains a

future Buddha. We are all Gods in the making. Alike are we, except that we are more or less unconscious of the truth. But the ignorant do not understand these things, and so seek refuge in symbols and forms, which are to the real thing as the shadow to the bird."

Inkyo Sama said musingly, "It is not the name of the God that we need to know, but the power of the God that we need to use, the love that we need to feel, the love that falls on our tired hearts like rain in the thirsty air."

The boy was quiet for a time, looking up at the fierce Ni-O and then into the placid face of Buddha within the room.

"Do the Gods never laugh?" he inquired. Then he flushed, fearing he had asked the wrong question, as the old men laughed softly.

"Yes," replied the priest. The Gods laugh when men pray to them for money." Then he said, "Come, we will go around the temple. One is never too young to learn of the Gods."

Before they could start the faint tinkle of a bell was heard and Inkyo Sama raised his head, a look of recognition and pleasure in his face.

"It is the pilgrim's bell," he said. "There must be a band of pilgrims coming up the mountain."

He hurriedly stepped to the entrance from which he could see the path, and motioned to the others to join him. They saw slowly climbing

the long flight of steps a band of anxious, travel-worn pilgrims, moving forward solemnly on their way to the temple. The leader moved ahead of the little procession, tapping from time to time a bell which was suspended from his girdle.

Sono after watching them for a few moments stepped to the side of the priest, put her little hand in his worn, wrinkled one and raising her face to him said:

"Why, oh, Honorable Abbot, do they come? They look so tired."

The priest watched the men mounting the steps and a kindly pitying look came to his eyes.

"Ah, my child," he said, "there is a blood-stained wound in broken hearts that only the touch of the Gods can heal. They come to the temples, seeking a hiding place from the wind, a covering from the tempest."

As the pilgrims came to the doorway and saw the Abbot, the leader knelt down and touched his head to the ground. When he arose he came forward and said, "We have come far to visit your temple. We have been to the thirty three temples of Kwannon, to the thirty eight temples of Kobodaisha and many others, and we have now come to the Shrine of the Sacred Jizo, and wish to have your seal in our book."

The priest bowed and in kindly words made them welcome, and held out his hands for the

book, but hardly had it been given him before Inkyo Sama said, "Let me see the book. It will be almost as good as a pilgrimage again for me to see the seals of the temples I have visited."

He was handed the book and he turned the pages eagerly, a flush on his old face, his eyes alight with interest.

"I see you have wandered far," he said. "To Kitsuki, the Holy of Holies, where the priest is the descendant of our loved Goddess of the Sun; to Ichibata, who gives sight to the blind. I can see again the many pilgrims ascending the long mountain path and the six hundred and forty steps to the shrine upon the windy summit; I can see them washing their eyes in the sacred spring and murmuring the holy words which so few of them understand: 'On-koro-koro-sendai-matoki-soaki.' And here is the seal from the Shrine of Kwannon of the eleven faces and before whose altar the holy fire has burned for a thousand years. And Sada, where the Sacred Snake lies coiled forever on the Sambo of the Gods; and Kishibojii where are suspended the many little dresses from mothers who have gone to pray for their children who are ill; and Yae-gaki where lovers pray for union with the beloved."

He turned the pages, murmuring, exclaiming, smiling, as he found the seals familiar to him.

“And you were at Kaka in the great cavern of the sea where each night the ghosts of little children come from the Sai-no-Kawara and pile before the Jizo the small heaps of pebbles. And every morning in the soft sand may be seen the fresh prints of little feet. I saw them and I bought, as I am sure you did, small sandals of straw and left them before the entrance so that the tiny feet might not be wounded by the sharp stones, and we walked with caution so that we might not overturn the mounds of pebbles, for then the children cry and you can hear them mourning above the sound of the sea.”

He started to hand the book back, then his eye caught sight of a great seal.

“Ah, you were at the temple in Kioto that was built by love, the eight million yen, all given rin by rin by the poor. You saw as I did the great beams of the roof that had been hauled to Kioto from the far away mountains with ropes made of the hair of the daughters and wives of the Followers of the Law. I myself touched with my hands one such cable more than three hundred and sixty feet long and as large as my wrist, and yet there are people who say that our religion is dying, that Buddhism is passing from our land. No, it has covered the hills with its shrines and filled the air with its melody of sweet toned bells. It is something that cannot be writ-



I CAN see again the many pilgrims ascending
the long mountain path.



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THE Temple gardens where a languid tranquillity hovered over the pine scented walls.

ten nor seen. It is inscribed on living hearts and will *never* die."

He closed the book and handed it back to the priest, then turned to the band of pilgrims standing patiently on the steps below him.

"You will pardon me for keeping you waiting, but the hill on which we old stand is not the spot from which we see the Land of Promise, but a spot from which we see a Land of Memory, and with your book in my hand I can see it all again. The tinkling of the pilgrims' bells, the incense before the shrines, the silent peace of the great temples, and about them lingering the spirit of our Blessed Buddha, the Lord of Lords, the Most High."

There was quiet for a moment, then the priest courteously invited the pilgrims to enter the temple. The priest leading, they followed through the great high-ceilinged rooms, where gold and lacquer shone with a faint dimness, and where over all was the fragrance of old incense. They went out of the temple to a secluded path leading to the famous Shrine of Jizo. Pebbles had been piled high about the feet of the statue, upon his knees and even upon his shoulders. The old priest said softly as the wrapt faces looked up at the image: "Jizo, the Diamond of Pity—Jizo, the little ones' God."

Then he turned to the children and said:

“See, it is thy God, the God who loves little children and who says, ‘I will hide thee in my sleeves and keep thee from all evil and play shadowy play with thee.’”

There was silence as the pilgrims prostrated themselves before the God, then each one took from a small wallet a tiny stone, which he placed reverently before the altar.

They wandered for an hour around the temple gardens where a languid tranquillity hovered over the pine scented walls; the birds floating on the lake, the faint ringing of unseen bells; all seemed to be another world from the trampled earth of the city streets.

At last the pilgrims with many thanks departed. Then the shadows saying that the evening was near, the children were given cakes wrapped in delicate white paper on which was the crest of the monastery, and they prepared to go homeward.

The doll was placed upon Sono's back as mothers carry their babies, and holding fast to Inkyo Sama's hand and peeping from time to time over her shoulder to see if her treasure was safe, Sono went down the temple steps the happiest little girl in all the Sunrise Kingdom.

CHAPTER VI

After this eventful day there began for Sono the happiest time of her childhood. She had a companion in play, Kané, a real comrade who came to her home at all times, who brought her gifts, given in his shy boyish manner, but still gifts. At one time it would be a pair of dragon flies, tied by a string; at another a semi in a little wicker cage, which sang all day. One night he brought her a firefly in a tiny house of netting which was hung upon the veranda to light their world with its little torch. Inkyo Sama taught them a song which they sang to it.

“The fireflies are searchers all
That tiny lanterns carry
To see if one can find at all
An honest fairy.”

The two families made excursions together constantly, at one time to see the peonies in bloom or to visit the gardens when the chrysanthemums were in their glory. The children were taken to visit the temples at the time of the district festivals, where lights from gayly decorated paper lanterns, swaying from every building and gate-

way, dazzled the eyes of the crowds of happy pleasure seekers. Lanterns of bronze and stone lent their sparkling blaze, while smaller lanterns of paper, carried by the masses moving to and fro, looked like so many fireflies dancing in the dark. The old people would find some place to sit and smoke and philosophize while the children joined the others in their merry games in the temple courtyard, where the flickering shadows shed by the many lights made them look like elves in a fairy dance.

They saw together the shows of the strolling players who dedicate their lives to the entertainment of Japan's little folk. There were the performances where the trained monkeys dressed up like children made the young audiences shriek with laughter. They would rush to the gateway when they heard the song and drum of the hawker of sugared peas, candied beans, starch patties or the sweet cakes so dear to children, and if they could not buy of his dainties they could enjoy his antics as he tried to amuse his hoped-for patrons. The favorite for Sono was the old woman who seemed to come by magic in the streets where she knew she would find children. She would soon be surrounded by dozens of jetty heads and eager forms, ready to give her their rin, as she set down her charcoal brazier. From the bamboo to which was suspended her

portable kitchen hung a griddle, several ladles and cake turners, a big blue and white jar of batter, and another for shoyo sauce. The little outfit could be hired for a time for the modest sum of five rin, when the little housewife could stir, ladle, bake and eat the cakes of her own making. These quiet pastimes were scorned by Kané, who was much more interested in erecting a tent within the gate, dressing Sono in one of Matsu's discarded kimonas, long that it might cover her feet, and causing her to wail and moan as real ghosts did on stormy nights. Or he would place a long stick in her hand, cover a round object with the top of the kimona and have her hold it over her head and wave it around, at the same time making weird unearthly noises, to show that she was a nuki-nube, the spirit that detaches its head and frightens people who are out at night. For these entertainments Kané stood at the door and collected the treasures of the other children. Pieces of string, a live frog, a very much dead small fish, a piece of bamboo; all were critically inspected by Kané as they were drawn reluctantly from sleeves, and if he thought the object to be exchanged worth the price of admission, the curious patron was allowed to enter his improvised theater.

Many evenings the children sat together upon the mats and played games with blocks by which

they learned the different names of the cities and towns between Tokio and Kioto, or a game called a "Hundred Verses of a Hundred Poets," where they were taught the names and poems of the great poets of Japan. There were other card games intended to impart moral culture, showing how heroic it is to curb one's evil passions and to beat all selfishness out of the heart, how royal it is to be clean, how noble to drown petty jealousies, how disgraceful to be avaricious.

At the Feast of the Boys Sono, dressed in her best kimona, visited the home of Kané and with him admired the great fish that had been erected by his grandfather to show that there was a son in the household, and that his parents hoped that he would win his way in the world against all obstacles, even as the carp ascends the swift rivers against the mighty current. At this time the whole town looked like a huge aquarium. Everywhere were floating, tied to long bamboo poles, immense, brightly colored paper fish which looked and moved as if alive. The lines holding them were within the head and the wind entering the open mouth inflated the body to perfect form, and kept them undulating, rising and falling, turning and twisting, exactly like a real fish, while the tails played and the fins waved with each movement of the body, and the sound of their motion as they swayed back and forth was as the sound

of the wind in the pine trees on a soft summer evening.

At the Feast of the Dolls, Kané, dressed in his best hakama, came to Sono and tried to admire O Hinna San as she sat in royal state upon a shelf of honor. Before the advent of this most beautiful doll in the world, in the eyes of its young mother at least, Sono had not been able to make a very good display with her little paper dolls, but now she was happy and proud and could ask all her young friends to her home on this day of days for the tiny young womenfolk of Japan.

Sono loved her doll with all her baby heart. She mothered it, she dressed it in the morning and passed hours in making it pretty kimonas; she unsewed them, and washed them, and spread them upon a board to dry as did her mother her own kimonas, and she nursed O Hinna San through all the illnesses to which dolls are subject. When she went to play her doll was strapped upon her back as were the babies, little sisters and brothers, of those most fortunate children who had babies in the family which they must guard while their mothers were occupied in household duties. But Sono was careful while playing bouncing the ball or puss in the corner, that her precious burden was securely fastened and did not meet with accident. At night was

undertaken the process of undressing the doll, and she crooned to it and sang it the cradle song of the hare and put it to bed on a mat beside her own futon. She wished her to sleep in the bed beside her, but she was shown that often mothers accidentally rolled upon their babies, and then O Hinna San would pass over the River of Souls and have to be taken to the God Kojin and placed before the small shrine at the foot of the sacred Enoki tree, which is the final resting place of damaged dolls, and the horror of this thought caused Sono to relinquish the pleasure of having her cherished baby in her arms at night.

Sono passed a year of happiness with her beautiful doll and it came again to the time of the Feast of the Dolls. The Governor of the province, who was Mr. Tokuwara's immediate superior, came to spend some time in the town, bringing with him his wife and small daughter, a child about the age of Sono. At the New Year when all the Japanese give presents to their friends, and especially to those above them in either official or social station, the Tokuwara had nothing worthy of giving the great man, and they were very much disturbed at the thought that they could make no adequate return for the beautiful present sent them by the Governor. The question was discussed during the months after the New Year Festival, and it was decided by

the parents that *something* must be given the Governor in return for his gift. What it was to be they could not decide, as they had no money with which to purchase a present, until finally the father, watching Sono playing with her beautiful doll, had a sudden inspiration. They would give the doll to the daughter of the Governor at the time of the Feast of the Dolls.

He took it from the hands of Sono and looked at it critically. It was a magnificent doll and worthy of even the daughter of the Governor. He would have his wife make it a new kimona, fashion an obi from some of the pieces of brocade or silk that she must have in store, and then he would be freed from the thought that he had received and not given.

Yet the father was a kindly man and did not want to give pain to his daughter, and he brooded for many days upon the subject but found no other solution of the problem. Finally he spoke to his wife.

"We must make a gift to the Governor," he said. "We cannot accept his gift without return."

"Yes, I understand," said Yuki. "But what can we buy that is worthy? Can we save in some way in order to buy a gift?"

"No," he replied. "I have tried to find means of saving a few yen, but this year there are no

yen to save. Everything goes before it is received even. But I have thought of a way."

The mother looked up, a pleased expression on her face. "I am so glad," she said. "Then we can save our face. It has been a burden upon us since the New Year."

"Yes," he said, after a moment's silence. "The Governor has a daughter and it will be a delicate thing for us to remember her at the Feast of the Dolls. He will appreciate it as much as if we were to make a present direct to him."

"But what can we give her?" asked the mother.

Her husband, without a word, pointed to O Hinna San, who was sitting in a corner of the room. The mother looked at the doll, but did not understand. Seeing her look, the father said: "We will give her O Hinna San."

Yuki half rose from the mat, extending her hands toward her husband, a horrified look upon her gentle face. "Oh, but we cannot give her the doll of Sono," she exclaimed.

"We must," he said shortly, with the decided look upon his face that his wife knew too well.

"We cannot," she protested. "It will break the heart of Sono. You would not hurt her so deeply."

"We must," he again reiterated.

At the look in her eyes, the man became angry. "I have said that we must give the doll. There

is no other way. You must tell her," he said, raising his voice.

The mother wept, but she realized that she must obey. The father watched her for a moment, then said: "Thou must not weep, O Yuki San, it must be done. I do not want to be cruel, but you understand, there is no other way that will give me back my honorable self-respect."

Yuki controlled herself, which was what was expected of her. This self-control must consist not simply in the concealment of all outward signs of disagreeable emotion, but in the assumption of a cheerful smile and agreeable manner under even the most distressing circumstances. She had been taught the duty of self-restraint and obedience to the Lord of the Household from her tiniest childhood, and she had learned well her lesson that the great lifelong duty of a wife is obedience and sacrifice. Yet she could not resist the impulse to try and save her child the sorrow she knew she would feel at the loss of her dearly loved doll. Sono had had so few toys, and this beautiful doll had meant so much to her.

"But," she said, "how can I tell Sono. It will surely break her heart."

"She is only a child," he said gruffly. "She will soon forget. You must make her understand. If you have trained your daughter as she should be trained, she understands that her only

duty is obedience to her parents. If you have not taught her the virtues of all womanhood, she who neglects to teach them, is equally guilty with the daughter who fails in them."

"But she is such a baby," commenced the mother, hoping to soften the heart of the father whom she knew loved Sono devotedly in his own hard, restrained manner.

"She is never too young to learn obedience," he said as he rose to leave the room. He paused in the open shoji and looking back said in a low tone, "I expect you to tell her."

Yuki touched her head to the mat in token of obedience, but her heart was very heavy as she went about her work. She could not speak to Sono until she was alone with her in her room, then she took the child in her arms and tried to explain to the wondering little one. Sono could not understand at first.

"Not my beautiful O Hinna San, Most Honorable Little Mother, not my beautiful doll?" she said in a horror-stricken voice. It seemed to her a thing incredible, impossible. When the mother told her again of the sacrifice that must be made Sono said, with heart broken voice, "Not my baby; no one ever takes a baby away from its mother. Not my *baby*, O Mother San."

But at last with infinite patience and tenderness the mother made her understand that it must

be, that her father had decreed it. Sono was put in her bed that night, stricken, dumb with grief, her whole childish world filled with darkness, and although she turned upon her futon and tried to sleep, the thought would come to her that she was going to lose her treasure, the thing that she loved most in the world, and she lay staring wide-eyed into the darkness.

It did not seem that it could possibly be true until in the morning she saw her mother hunt in the chest for pieces of silk with which to make the new kimona. When Inkyo Sama saw the preparations, a hurt look came into his kindly eyes, but he could say nothing. He also understood that they could not be under obligations to the great man, and much to Sono's distress he raised no plea in her behalf.

At night when she saw her beloved in her bright new kimona and her pretty obi, saw the new geta put on the little feet and knew that in the early morning O Hinna San would be taken from her forever, she could not restrain herself; she cried as will all children at what they feel is an injustice. She was a mother pleading for her young, but her father was firm, and at last she was put in her little bed where she turned and tossed and finally cried herself to sleep.

In the gray of the early morning she stole quietly from her futon and went softly to the

room of Inkyo Sama, and crept into his arms. There in the safety and shelter of the arms of her dear old grandfather, whom she knew understood the trouble that was in her heart, she told her sorrow between sobs, the old man gently stroking the black hair and murmuring loving words of endearment.

Finally she quieted and when the sobs allowed her to speak she said: "But, O Inkyo Sama, they will not take my O Hinna San. They cannot take her away. She is my baby, *mine*, the Honorable Abbot gave her to me, to be mine forever and forever and forever."

The old man drew her closer and said in a soft, low voice, "My little flower, it must be done. Thy father has willed it, and thou knowest a daughter must obey her parents."

"But it is my baby—*my* baby," she said over and over again. "They cannot give her to another mother. I cannot give her up, I cannot, O Inkyo Sama."

"Dear Heart," said Inkyo Sama. "Many mothers have had to sacrifice more than children for their parents. Some have sacrificed their lives."

"I had rather die than live without O Hinna San," wailed the sobbing child.

"There are harder things than dying, O Sono San. Let grandfather tell you of women who

have given their real babies for the sake of their parents. Tokiwa in the olden time was holding her baby in her arms when she learned of the death of her husband. She took her children and went to her old home, but found the castle in the hands of the enemy, and her mother sentenced to death. She saved that mother's life by giving up her two children to the conqueror.

"And there was another woman in this province who allowed her husband to bury her child when they were all starving, so that the extra food could be given his mother. Did not that take courage, *ko-bana*? You see these women were of your race and they were brave. And there are others; there was Odani, who chose death with all her children, rather than leave her husband when he suffered defeat. She was a good wife, and to be a good wife one must first be a good daughter.

"Even little children have sacrificed their lives for their parents. Once upon a time there was the son of a Samurai, one of your blood, Sono, whose father was being hunted for his life. The enemy of the father came suddenly upon the boy as he stood wondering over the headless body of a stranger who had been slain near his home. He was asked if the man was his father. Knowing his father's danger, anxious to help him to escape, and seeing the mistake that the officer had made, he resolved to save his father. His reply was to

catch up the severed head. Holding it to his breast for a moment, he laid it down reverently, then committed hari-kari. The officer was sure then that it was useless to look farther for the father, and the Samurai was able to escape."

He was quiet for a moment, his hand softly caressing the little head nestling against him, then he resumed in his quiet loving tones, "You do not understand, yet, my dear one. It is hard to learn the lesson, but the duty of children to their parents is the fountainhead of all goodness, and the first duty of a daughter is to obey unquestioningly. A girl does not belong to herself, my Springtime, but to her parents."

Sono's low choking sobs were the only answer, and the old man was silent for a time, then continued: "You must learn to love, yield, renounce all that you hold dear at the command of your parents. You must be ready at an instant's notice to give your life if necessary for your father or mother. Your happiness in life will be dependent upon how well you learn the lesson, the putting aside of your own self and your own wishes. Not even a God can make unhappy a person who has learned to forget self and to give all for others."

He was quiet for a time, Sono nestling closer to him and trying to stifle her sobs.

"Ah, dear heart," he said softly, "the rose and

the thorn,—the same stem beareth both, one root is theirs, and thou art finding the thorns now—but the roses are there.”

“What can I do, O Inkyo Sama? I do not love them,” whispered Sono, putting her little hands up to the old face looking down into hers. “I only love you, O Inkyo Sama, you and Hinna San.”

A smile came to the lips of the old man, a smile of infinite love and supreme gentleness. “Ah, my Blossom,” he said, “the sun is darkened in thy sky at present but it will shine again. I—I love thee, little one—thou hast all my heart. But I want my Sono to be brave, so that I may be proud of her; be brave like all the women of her race, and be obedient so that she will not bring disgrace upon her ancestors, upon the women whose brave blood is in her veins—they must not be made ashamed that a Samurai’s daughter could not renounce the dearest thing in her life to help her father. He needs thee, Sono, he needs this sacrifice and thou shouldst be proud to make it for him.”

“My Sono is a woman to-day, a brave Samurai woman, not a child. She will now go into the other room and say good-by to O Hinna San, knowing that she is being brave and by her obedience helping her father who is in trouble. She will say ‘Sayonara,’ and say it bravely as a Jap-

anese woman must—she will say it with a smile.”

Sono lay quietly staring up at the ceiling. At last a look of resolution came to her baby face. She rose and trying with all her childish might to keep back the tears, said: “Sono will be brave, O Inkyo Sama. Sono will be brave. She will say ‘Sayonara’ to O Hinna San—and—she will say it with a smile.” She turned quickly, holding her little head high so that the tears would not fall, and passed through the doorway.

Sono went into the room where the doll was lying dressed in her gorgeous robes, and taking her in her arms she drew her close to her breast, murmuring tender, loving little words to her. She crooned in a choking voice some of the words of the cradle song with which she was wont to put her to sleep at night. She held the doll before her and studied the loved face, then drew her convulsively again close to her breast. Then slowly, reluctantly she placed the doll on a mat in a corner of the room. She went into the kitchen and prepared a little table of food, such as is given to a parting guest or a loved one who is going on a long journey.

When it was ready she brought it in and placed it before O Hinna San, and kneeling down opposite her, looked long at the beloved doll. Then, after touching her head to the floor, she held

out her hands to her baby that she was going to see no more and said, her little lips trembling through the smile that she tried to bring to them, "Sayonara, O Hinna San, Sayonara."


PART II



CHAPTER I

Sono was brought up at home, in the old-fashioned way, which produced one of the sweetest types of women that the world has ever seen. She was taught that simplicity of heart, obedience and love of duty were the first requisites of a Japanese lady. Her natural grace of manner was cultivated, she was taught all the arts and little refinements that constitute the charm of the high-born woman of Japan.

A woman who had been a famous geisha, but who was now old and no longer demanded at the tea houses, gave her lessons on the koto and the samisen, and taught her to sing the old-time ballads, the folk songs and the love songs of the people. Sono had a soft sweet voice that lent itself well to the sad minor strains of the music, and, kneeling beside her koto, with her jet black hair framing her pale, clear-cut face, her delicate fingers touching the strings of the instrument, she made a picture never to be forgotten. Even her father took delight in her music, and did not regret the money spent for the instruction. At first he refused to have Sono taught the elaborate tea service, saying he could not spend money on



the acquirement of graces, when rice was necessary; but Yuki and Inkyo Sama insisted that Sono should have the accomplishments belonging to a woman of her class. She was a lady born, and should have the education of a lady, even if it became necessary to sacrifice the more material things of life.

To pay the music teacher, the women who taught her the elaborate art of arrangement of flowers and the formal service of tea, and the master who taught her that difficult art of writing with the brush, many, many sacrifices were made. All were in the plot to save the yen for the lessons. Matsu chaffered long with the fishman to save a few rin, and the old grandfather smoked the tobacco used by the laboring man because of its cheapness.

The mother made the greatest sacrifices. She had carefully guarded her wardrobe, given her by the numerous members of her family, when she came to her new home as a bride. It was one of her greatest pleasures to go to the box and unfold the few gorgeous obis which are the pride of a Japanese woman. Many of them were heir-looms, wonderful pieces of old brocade that could not now be found in the silk shops. These went one by one to the money-lender, and added their mite in the transformation of Sono into the delicate, graceful maiden, too gentle and exquisite

for other than the old Japanese society of gentle-folk.

Consequently Sono could write beautiful ideographs, that caused her teacher, an old priest, to delight in her work; could make with single, swift strokes of the brush the delicate pictures which mean so much to the Japanese artist, but which seem unfinished to the man from the West who has no imagination, and cannot read the thought behind the few swiftly drawn lines; she knew the graceful art of arranging flowers, which to these beauty-loving people is a scientific study. They do not mass together their roses and gardenias, maiden hair fern and calla lilies, surrounding them with a dish of green—that seems to the Japanese nothing short of barbarism. That would destroy in the mind of the artist the chief charm of flowers and leaves, which consists in their form of growth, their harmonious symmetry, and their natural relations. She was taught to treat each gracious beauty or splendor of the garden or of the pool as an individual to be honored, studied, and separately enjoyed. She learned their symbolism, their seasons, which flowers to put before the family shrines, and which to place in the Toko-no-ma. It was a difficult study, but well worth the care and time given it, as those who understand the true principles of floral decoration, by simple force of such knowl-

edge are supposed to possess the privilege of associating with superiors, as well as a serene disposition and forgetfulness of care.

Sono was skilled in needle work and embroidery, and in the serving of the ceremonial tea, which must not be confounded with the serving of ordinary tea for refreshment. The proper making and serving and drinking of the ceremonial tea is the most formal of social observances, each step of which is prescribed by a rigid code of etiquette. Etiquette of all kinds was not left for Sono to learn by chance, but she was taught by teachers who made a specialty of it. Everything in the daily life had rules. The etiquette of bowing, the position of the body, the arms and the head while saluting, the methods of opening and shutting of the shojiis, rising and sitting down upon the mats, the manner of serving a meal, were all, down to the minutest details taught to Sono. All this teaching made her mistress of the elaborate art of receiving and serving the guests that came to her home with that exquisite courtesy, that dainty womanliness that seems to envelope the Japanese lady in a robe of refinement and grace.

The grandfather watched Sono's growth with loving eyes, and it was to him she owed her moral training, her knowledge of the gods, her mastery of the poets and her interest and love of nature.

He said: "The language of books is less plain than scent and song and wind in the trees. The clue to life lies in the wisdom of the earth, rather than in the learning of men. She must love the earth, the trees, the flowers."

Along with his lessons that taught her the beauties of the world about her, he gave her little moral lessons, for, as he said, "The human heart is worth infinitely more than the human intellect; moral beauty is greater than intellectual beauty. Our flower must be taught the things that will make her a good wife, a good mother; then she will have fulfilled her destiny."

So by precept and story she was shown that she must never show jealousy, grief or anger. From her smallest babyhood, she was taught the repression of self. If she fell and hurt herself, she must not cry, as that was not brave nor becoming the daughter of a Samurai. If she was crossed in some desire she must submit sweetly as became a true woman. If angered or if spoken to harshly, she must not answer in kind, nor must she raise her voice. "The Gods love them who swallow down their wrath."

A Japanese lady must always speak in a low, soft voice and betray no emotions except those pleasant to behold. Above all she was taught that she owed her parents and her family absolute, unquestioning obedience. It was not the

most judicious preparation for life, except for the sheltered life of a woman of the higher classes. It was a complete renunciation of self, the ideal of perfect unselfishness.

Sono did not rebel. She was a happy child and a happy girl. She liked to be at home arranging flowers for the alcoves or to place before the family Gods, decorating the rooms, and feeding the gold fish in the garden pond, who would come swiftly to the side of the pool when they saw her coming.

Kané, too, was growing to manhood. He was an artist like his grandfather and his father before him. His hand inherited the skill of generations of artists, and already the work of the young man in the remote seaside town was noticed by connoisseurs in Tokio. He loved his art and saw beauty in everything: the branch of the pine tree, the grace of the bamboo, the flight of a bird across the blue horizon, all spoke to his artistic soul and he tried to reproduce what he saw in silver or ivory. He was a dreamer, too, and with his grandfather, Sono, and Inkyo Sama, spent long happy days on the mountain side, studying the motions of the maple leaves when blown by the winds, or the exact poise of a butterfly in flight. To his grandmother's sorrow he inherited from his grandfather along with his artistry, the impracticality that seems to go with

the life of an artist. He loved his work for the work itself, and its reduction into yen was the only part of the work he did not like. It was always a sorrow to him when the pieces over which he had labored so lovingly were finished, and he had to see them packed into the boxes that went to the merchants in Tokio.

The families of Kané and Sono were the closest of friends and they saw each other constantly. His quick step on the stone-flagged pathway, his eager, boyish voice, his joyous laugh were always welcomed by every one. Inkyo Sama especially loved him because of his boyish optimism, his eager youth that always saw the promised land.

CHAPTER II

On Sono's eighteenth birthday, she had a few friends, young girls like herself, in to tea. They passed the afternoon chatting of the little things that interest girls, wandering over the garden and playing the old-time games of battledore and shuttlecock, until the shadows began to lengthen. When they had gone, Sono, in the dimming light, strolled down to the lotus pond and was standing there looking at the fish who were begging her for the crumbs she had not brought, when Kané came.

He stopped when he saw Sono. It seemed to him that he saw her for the first time. She stood there dainty and slender in her robe of silver and gray with obi of lavender satin, looking like some beautiful silver moth robed in the folding of its own wings.

It was a moment for Kané never to be forgotten, the moment when the boy, now a man, learned that the world contained nothing for him but this girl standing at the edge of the lotus pond. He stopped in the path, as the surprise of the discovery left him breathless. The vision standing there seemed to the artistic soul of the

boy too beautiful to be true. He had seen Sono every day of his life, but to-night she was different. He watched her with an irresistible emotion swelling at his heart, then he went quickly to her side.

"Sono," he said in a low voice.

Sono, startled, looked up, and she saw something in the eyes looking so passionately into hers that held her for an instant, then a rosy red covered her neck, her face, and hid in the soft waves of her black hair, until, unable longer to bear the gaze of Kané she looked down. He said nothing for a moment, then he leaned closer to the girl standing there swaying slightly, half frightened at the new emotion she felt within her breast.

"Sono," he whispered, "thou—look at me—let me see your eyes."

Sono shyly raised her eyes to meet those looking into hers, and Kané saw what he desired. He obtained a glimpse of something never before imagined, of something that seemed to him almost too beautiful, and he caught his breath with a little cry of joy. He made a quick movement and Sono was in his arms.

"Sono, my Sono," he cried. "I see my own soul in thine eyes as thine in mine."

In that moment when they felt the thrill of first love vibrate through their beings, they for-

got everything but that they had found each other, had found this new wonderful thing that made the world seem suddenly to have grown more beautiful.

Softly Sono disengaged herself from his arms, saying in a low tone: "Kané, thou must not," but it was spoken in that woman's voice of which every syllable is a caress. Kané did not answer, but caught her two hands in his own, and they stood gazing at each other while a tenderness invisible seemed to gather about them there in the old garden, where there were no shadows, there was no sun, only the soft gray light of early evening.

"Ah, Sono," he said passionately, "do not cover thine eyes, lift the veil that I may read within them what I long to see."

As she raised her eyes to his, he looked at her as if seeing her beauty for the first time, then he said in a low voice: "Brown velvet eyes, curtained with satin. Cheeks carved out of sun-browned ivory; hair, thy hair could teach the night how to grow dark. Oh, my Sono, I love thee, I love thee. Tell me that thou lovest me, even as I do thee."

She crept into his outstretched arms.

"Kané, Kané, I do not understand," she said in a low wondering voice. "I do not understand.

I—I—is it love that I feel for thee? I—I—do not understand——”

He drew her closer to him and they stood there, her head against his breast, his arms around her slender figure, until the silence was broken by the voice of a woman chanting in a tone of singular sweetness, that rang through the garden like the long call of a flute: “*Amma-kamishino, go-hyakamon*,” and between the long sweet calls the plaintive whistle, one long note and two shorter ones in another key. The voice of the old blind shampooer passing along the street was haunting and ended the strange witchcraft that enfolded Sono and Kané, like the wonder of some dream broken by a sound.

They drew away from each other, and Sono, bending over the edge of the lake, began tossing leaves to the fish below. Finally she knelt upon a flag on the edge of the pond, and taking from her sleeve her little paper handkerchief, looked up at Kané with a gay little laugh.

“Kané, we will make a paper boat as they do at *Yaegaki-Jinja* and put into it one rin and set it afloat. Hast thou a rin?”

Kané handed her the small copper coin and she put it into the tiny boat and placed it in the water.

“When it is wet,” she said, looking intently at the little boat floating on the surface of the

water," the rin will cause it to go to the bottom. We will make a wish and if the fish touch it, the Gods wish us to be happy—if not——"

The two faces bending over the water anxiously watched the tiny boat as it settled slowly into the green depths, and when it was nesting on the sandy bottom, they laughed as the greedy fish, thinking it was the usual offering, hurried to its side. They were silent a moment as the disappointed fish nosed the ruined boat, then left it, as if saying to their friend, "You have deceived me."

Sono looked up at Kané. "What didst thou wish, Kané?"

"I wished—I wished—I hardly know what I wished," he replied. "But I think that it was that our souls should remain together, one within the other, like the lacquered boxes of an inro. And thou, Sono, what didst thou wish?"

"I did not wish," she answered. "I only prayed the Gods to make me one with thee, as the wearer is one with the garment."

The clatter of geta was heard and Inkyo Sama came up the pathway. He looked closely at the two as they stood before him.

"Good evening, Kané; I did not know that you were here," he said.

Kané bowed to him respectfully, and said, "I came to see if you and O Sono San would



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***THEY** passed the afternoon wandering
over the garden.*



THEY went to see the wistaria, where the masses of flowers turned the arbors into

go with me to-morrow night in my boat. It is the feast of the Goddess of the Sea. My Honorable Grandfather will also go."

Inkyo Sama looked at Sono.

"Dost thou care to go?" he asked.

Sono murmured a low assent, and Kané said: "Then I will come for you at twilight."

He turned to go. "Sayonara, O Sono San—for a time."

She said in a low voice, without raising her eyes:

"Sayonara, O Kané San, Sayonara—for a time."

When he was gone there was silence between the old man and the young girl, an embarrassed silence. Then Inkyo Sama went up to Sono and taking her face into his hands turned it so that he could look into it. He studied it for a moment, then he said in a low tone: "Has it come to thee, my little one?" Sono did not reply, and he went on: "Ah thou needst not answer, thy face has changed. It is like a lotus blossom courting favor and thy lips are like the smile of a red flower. It has come to thee as softly as the Spring's perfume to preach its golden gospel. It sounds as sweet to thee as a nightingale singing its song upon the plum tree—I know. I am old and gray, gray with the grayness of all forgotten and weather-beaten things—but I remember. It

comes but once, and it is the one great gift of the Gods to recompense us for the sorrows of all life."

Sono looked into the kind old face bending above hers and she tried to smile, but her lips quivered and her eyes filled with tears. "I do not understand, O Inkyo Sama, I do not understand. It is too beautiful—the whole world seems to have changed—and—and—I do not understand——"

"Ah," he whispered softly to her, drawing her head to his breast and quietly caressing her hair, "thou dost not understand, but thou swayed towards Kané like a lotus leaf in a soft current. The winds have struck thy harp and the waves are wafting melodies that only thou canst hear." He was silent for a few moments, then he said in soft tender tones: "All memories, all desires fade away like the flowers of the cherry tree, but love remains. Thou hast the desire of the world, my Sono, and thou holdest it in thy hand. Love and life and strength are standing at the gates of thy enchanted garden, that beautiful garden of dreams."

CHAPTER III

Then began a haze of happy days for Sono. Both of the families looked with kindly eyes upon the little love story being played before their eyes. Sono and Kané saw each other constantly. Inkyo Sama was growing old and the work of the garden becoming too heavy for him, so Kané came to his assistance. In the afternoon, when the light became too dim for his work, Kané would come up the tree-shaded pathway and call to Inkyo Sama, and together they would take the old wood from the clumps of the bamboo, or trim the plum trees, or drag the dead leaves from the lotus pond. This little lake was the favorite meeting place for the boy and girl. Here and there on its edge, and level with the water were placed huge flat stones on which he and Sono knelt to call the fish or to watch the lotus blooms, the pink and white flowers springing from the water, which are looked upon as the symbol of the Buddhist life. With Inkyo Sama beside them they would sit and study the flowers by the hour, as the passing wind disturbed the delicate balance of the leaf whose shiny surface reflected every passing phase of the sky, and was constantly changing colors as

the clouds passed over it. They would sit quietly beside each other in the fading light and listen to Inkyo Sama, who, as he grew older, loved more and more to philosophize, and to whom everything in nature was a subject to which he could attach a moral or use as a lesson to teach these young people whom he loved, the great precepts of Buddhism. To him all life was an illusion, the longest prosperity but a dream. The people in this great material world should not be deceived by the borrowed lodging that they called their own, or struggle for its happiness. They should come to nature, to the flowers and trees to learn the lesson of the Eight Fold Path, as she was the only teacher to be trusted.

The happy young couple listened respectfully as the old man rambled on. It was enough for them that they could be together, looking into each other's eyes, touching each other's hand as they bent over the water to caress a flower or to feed the hungry fish. The artistic soul of the boy delighted in the charm of the place, the shadows of the trees, the delicate loveliness of the face beside him.

He would note the curving beauty of the petals to the lotus flower, its grace as the wind caused it to sweep the waters.

"It is sheer beauty, is it not, O Inkyo Sama, beauty come to life, and I cannot carve it. It is

cold on ivory, and only a dead flower when chased on silver. I cannot make it live."

The old man answered: "Yes, it is beauty, and we must always look for beauty. A grain of *jako* is better than a mountain of sand, but beauty is not the thing, but what it symbolizes. See! this flower is like the life of a man. Though he were born in a hovel, he can have virtue like the lotus flowers springing from slime, and as the odor of the lotus sweetens the air around it, so a man's good deeds influence those about him. As it opens in the morning sunshine, so is the mind expanded by knowledge. Its branchless stalks rising without a break to the leaf, are a type of singleness of purpose, and its roots can be eaten, which shows that its true object, its very base, is service to others. As it grows in the mud yet produces a lovely flower, it is a symbol of purity in an evil world. You must put all that in your flower when you carve it, if you would have it live."

Kané and Sono did not pass all their time sitting quietly in the old garden. They played like happy children, Sono swiftly running along the winding pathways, her wide sleeves floating in the wind, seeming to Kané, as he pursued her laughingly, like some gorgeous butterfly. Kané, like the boy he was, would throw stones at the crows that infested the garden, until Inkyo Sama would

come scolding: "Thou must not hurt the crow," he would cry with a shocked voice. "He is the most filial bird. Does he not repay his parents for feeding him while young, by bringing them food as he grows strong? They share in Buddha's love with the wild uguisau, who passes his life in singing praises unto the Sutra of the Good Law."

When they were tired of play, Sono would sit upon some grassy bank and Kané would lie at her feet, where he could see her face. It was all quiet and peace within the enchanted garden. There was no sound except the song of the birds and the cry of the semi. These little crickets made every tree in the garden quiver with their clamor, from the piercing cry of those who only sing their songs in the brilliant sunshine, to the soft-voiced insect of the eventime, who chants like a Buddhist priest reciting the kyo.

They heard the chatter of birds as they cuddled into their resting places to wait for the dawn to lift the leaves from about their drowsy heads, and they listened to the wild doves and the ho-to-to-gi-su, the bird that is not really a creature of this living world, but a night wanderer from the land of darkness. Its long sad call, that seemed to come from the depths of a heart of sorrow, said quite plainly: "Surely it is better to return, surely it is better to return," and Kané

knew that night was coming and he must leave the garden of enchantment.

The two young people were living in a magic world, a world of love, where all movement seemed slow and soft, where voices were hushed and faces smiled at them. They were allowed to go on their excursions as before, always accompanied by O Inkyo Sama. Often the two families would spend the day together in some garden famous for its beauty. They went to see the wistaria, where the masses of flowers turned the arbors into big bouquets of pale mauve, and seemed to drip like fountains from the tall oaks and cryptomerias. They visited the monastery on the mountain-side when the maples were dressed in their gorgeous plumage of autumn, looking like grand court ladies robed in gayly embroidered gowns. The old men wrote little poems and hung them upon the trees, comparing the beauty of the maple, which sends her glory away on the wings of the first fickle wind, to the evanescent joy of life, which lasts but for a day. Sono and Kané were allowed to roam among the flowers, to sit beneath the trees for hours, where they made happy plans for the future that was to be theirs together.

To Sono every day brought some remembrance of her lover. One morning it would be a little verse hung upon a flowering tree or upon the

wind bell beneath the roof of her veranda. Perhaps only a few lines such as:

"For grace a maiden is like a slender willow, for youthful charm she is the cherry tree in flower, for sweetness she is the blossoming plum tree. My sweetheart is all three."

One day he sent her a scroll on which he had painted Hotei, the God of Happiness, sailing in his little bark down the sea of life. Sono put it away carefully, saying to herself, "We will have it for our home." Another time he left down by the pool a little mollusk which she knew was the symbol of fidelity.

To Sono life seemed to have grown sweeter. Even the light was clearer; there was a new charm in the blue of the sky.

CHAPTER IV

One day Kané came hurriedly up the pathway. There was a flush on his boyish face, excitement in his eager voice. As soon as he saw Sono he came to her.

"Sono, Sono," he cried. "I am going to Tokio. The great artist Shimoda has seen my vase, and asks that I come to him for a year, and he will teach me. Think of it, Sono. Think of the honor. He is the most famous artist in Japan. My Honorable Grandfather is so happy that he nearly wept. Think of it, Sono, I will see Tokio, and study under Shimoda himself."

Sono did not speak. Kané looked down into the face before him, and instead of the happy face he expected to see, he saw tears gather in the eyes. He moved quickly towards her.

"What is it, Sono. Are you not glad that I can go to the great artist?" he asked anxiously.

Sono said: "I am glad for thee, Kané, but a year—Oh, Kané——"

"A year will pass so soon, Sono," the boy replied quickly. "And think, I will have the chance to see the work of other artists, to speak with them, perhaps, and to learn from them. Here

I have no chance. I can only learn what my Honorable Grandfather can teach me. Perhaps, oh, Sono, perhaps I too may be a great artist like Shimoda."

She was silent and he hastened to say with a boy's eagerness, "It will be all for you, Sono. I would like to be great for you, dear one, so that you may be proud of me, and you can say 'I am the wife of the great artist Kané,'" and as she was still silent, he went on: "And I would make much money, not be poor as we are now, and I could buy you beautiful kimonas and obis, obis like the wife of the Governor wears——"

Sono put up her hand. "Oh, Kané, you do not understand. I do not want the obis, I only want you."

Kané moved to her side and taking her in his arms looked down into the quivering face.

"It is but a year, dear one," he said, in a low voice, "only a year out of our life, and when I return we shall be always together, never separate for a moment, you and I. We will have our happy life, you will sit beside me while I work, and we will go to the gardens when our work is over. We will go alone then, because you will be my wife, and we will come home in the evening and sit on the veranda and listen to the night winds in the trees, and watch the fireflies—like wandering stars that will fall from the sky to



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***W**E will plant pine trees before our door.*



THE great bronze bell.

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glow in our garden. Oh, Sono—we will be so happy. We will plant pines and bamboo, and plum trees before our door to tell the world that love lives there—just we two, Sono, forever and forever and forever.”

Sono dried her tears and smiled again and answered the eager boy with loving gentleness, and they walked back and forth upon the stone-flagged pathway, planning the happy future when Kané should return with all the knowledge he had gained in the workshop of the great artist.

The days passed swiftly and on the evening before Kané was to go to Tokio he came to see Sono to say good-by, as he was leaving early in the morning. Inkyo Sama came to them as they were in their favorite place before the lake.

“To-morrow you go, Kané, to learn new lessons, to enter a new life,” he said. “To-night thou shouldst go to the temple and ask the Gods to bless thee. Perhaps in the life of a great city thou wilt neglect the Gods. Thou must not or thou wilt become like a thoughtless child playing before the well. Thou canst not live without the Gods.”

They went down the pathway shaded by over-arching trees into the splendor of the soft blue night that comes before the darkness. In the luke warm air was a mingling of familiar odors, smells of saké, of the sea, of the heavy smoke of

wood fires which curled above the roofs where the village people were preparing the evening meals. As they neared the temple the heavy scent of incense was brought to them on the evening breeze, incense before the shrines of the Gods. A melancholic, rhythmic chant came to them, telling them that the evening service was being held, the priests were intoning the Sutra of the Good Law. As they entered the doorway they could see nothing but gleams of gilding in a soft gloom, then when their eyes became accustomed to the obscurity they saw around the sanctuary on three sides, shapes of enormous lotus flowers, cutting like silhouettes against the vague gray light. At the dark end of the room facing the entrance was the altar of Buddha, a rich and lovely altar covered with bronze and gilded utensils, clustered to right and left of the golden temple. Before it blue smoke rose up from many tiny rods of incense planted in the braziers. At one side was the great bronze bell with which to call the attention of the Gods. They set the beam before it swinging lightly and a sound deep as thunder, rich as the tones of a mighty organ, rolled over the hills and far away. Then followed another lesser and sweeter melody of tone, then another and another, then only a wave of echoes which continued to sob and mourn for many moments.

When the bell had ceased its murmuring they clasped hands and knelt before the great altar, prayed silently for a moment, then rose. As they were leaving the temple, Sono caught sight of the little bamboo holder which contains the future fate of the believer.

"Come, Kané," she whispered, "let us see what the future has for thee."

He took in his hands the hollow bamboo filled with small, numbered slips of wood. Kneeling he shook the box, and when one of the slips of wood detached itself from the others and fell on the floor, he took it to a priest who gave him a small yellow paper. Kané read:

"He who draws forth this mikuji let him live according to the Heavenly law and worship Kwannon. If his trouble be sickness, it shall pass from him. If he has lost aught, it shall be found. If he love a woman he shall win her, though he should have to wait, and great shall be his joy."

Sono's eyes shone with happiness.

"See Kané," she said as soon as they were in the courtyard, "the Gods promise us happiness. I can wait, Kané,—if you are not forgotten you can wait, and you will not forget me, Kané."

Kané drew her to him in the shadow of the trees. "My little princess, my dear one, I am wholly thine. I am coming back to be with thee always, always. Nothing shall ever part us

again. I love thee, Sono, I love thee with all my heart, with all of me. Tell me that thou wilt not forget,—that thou wilt be always mine.”

Sono said, “I am thine, Kané, I can say no more. One cannot take back what one has once given.”

“Oh, Sono,” said the boy eagerly, “I will do such great things for thee. My Honorable Grandfather says that to have faith is to create, to have hope is to call down blessings, and to have love is to work miracles. I have all three, I will work miracles, dear one——”

Sono laughed softly and touched the face bending over hers. “Ah, Kané, though great the thing man builds, it is not so great as his dreams.”

“But I *will* make my dreams come true, Sono, because I am working for you. It is different than if I were working for just myself, or for mere ambition. When you work for love, for some one you love as I love you, Sono, you *must* succeed.”

They were quiet for a few moments as they walked slowly down the deserted street. Then the boy turned to Sono, “You will write to me, Sono, you will write to me and tell me all that you do?”

Sono hesitated.

“I do not know——” she hesitated. “Should a young girl write to a man——?”

“But I am not a man—I am your promised husband—you will be my wife when I return. You will write to me, Sono, promise me you will.”

Sono laughed a little at his eagerness, but again hesitated. “O Inkyo Sama and thy Honorable Grandfather will write and tell you all the news——”

He interrupted her. “It is not news I want. My Honorable Grandfather will tell me the news of the household, of course, but that is not what I want. It is word from you, written by your own hand, telling me that you still love me, that you are waiting for my return, that the days are long—that—that—Oh, Sono, promise me you will write,” the boy pleaded.

Sono said as they turned into the gateway, “Here is O Inkyo Sama, we will ask him, and if he thinks it proper, I will write thee, Kané.”

As they met the old man the boy turned to him eagerly.

“O Inkyo Sama, I wish Sono to write me when I am gone, to write me all that she does and all that is within her heart. She may, you will allow it?”

The old man looked at the two young faces before him, but did not reply for a moment. Then he said: “It is not becoming that a girl write to a man—but——” as he saw the disappointed shadow come into the two pairs of eyes

raised to him, he added, "If Sono wishes she may write thee once a month, Kané. It will make the time of waiting less long for you both."

Kané turned to Sono triumphantly.

"See? I knew O Inkyo Sama would understand, and know that I must hear from thee. Thou wilt write." Then he turned to Inkyo Sama—"But a month, a month is so long to wait."

The old man shook his head decisively.

"No, once a month Sono may write thee all that passes within our households, and it will give thee something for which to wait another month. A year will mean twelve letters, not twelve long months."

Kané frowned, but he saw that he must be content. Inkyo Sama turned to Kané and said solemnly, "Kané, you are going to the city, to the place that causes men to lose the inner gold that makes them great. You will find there a new life. It may bring you the bowl of happiness or cause you to drink deep of the bowl of sorrow. You will have new temptations, and many can resist the temptations of suffering, but few can resist the temptations of pleasure. But remember in times of sorrow or in times of joy that the Gods are with thee. Across the silent places of thy heart will come at times the cry for more than the world can give and if you find the

answer to that call, it is like taking refuge from the sun under the shadow of a great tree. You are going where Art is made a God. Remember that you owe allegiance to more than beauty, more than symmetry, more than the laws of art. Raise an altar in your heart to a real God, not to an empty shadow nor simply to one of His means of expression." He was quiet for a moment then he said softly, "Life is like a leaf floating on the surface of the waters, going where the wind drives it, mounting on the waves, sinking, in a moment reappearing on the surface and wandering back and forth until at last it disappears beneath the eddy. Let that life of yours sail through singing waters, Kané, not on the edges of a muddy, deadened stream." He turned as if to go, then he saw Sono standing near Kané, and he stopped. "Kané, I do not fear for thee. Thou hast heard a strain of greater music in this garden that will make thee wearied of paltry songs."

He came to Kané and put one hand on his shoulder. "Sayonara, my boy, the Gods be with thee. Sayonara," and the old man, after looking long and tenderly into the young face bowed respectfully before him, turned and left them alone.

Kané caught Sono quickly in his arms.

"Ah, Sono," he said. "I will carry thy letters with me always and when the work is hard and

the days seem long, I will read them and see thy face before me. Thou wilt make them long, Sono, thou wilt not forget one thing. Thou wilt tell me all that thou hast done, all that thou thinkest, because I will be jealous of even the roses in the garden or the sun that shines upon thee while I am gone. Oh, the days will be dreary"—and the boy's eyes looked pitifully in the eyes raised to his,—“the days will be long, Sono——”

“But, Kané,” she said with a laugh, “you will have the company of the great artist—and you will meet other artists—and you will be learning to make beautiful things——”

He interrupted her, drawing her to him fiercely. “What is that, what is work, what is *anything* compared to love, my Sono? How can I live without thee—how can I pass the days knowing I will not see thee in the evening——?”

Sono put up her hand and caressed his face gently, while woman-like she tried to forget her sorrow and console him. “The time will pass,” she said, “and soon you will be coming back to me.”

“Thou wilt be true to me?” he whispered. “Thou wilt not forget me?”

“Oh, Kané,” she said softly. “How canst thou ask? I love thee with all my heart. I am thine entirely. Each tree, each flower, each path-way we have gone together will speak of thee. A

thousand voices will cry thy name, will speak to me through the things we have loved together. Thou wilt never be far from me, my Kané."

He was silent, holding her close in his arms, then he whispered, his face against hers, "I may learn to paint a picture on running water or twist the fine sand into thread before my love for thee will fade. It is like a rope of twisted bamboo, Sono, that time can never break."

They stood there, close in each other's arms, dreading the final word of parting, until the voice of Inkyo Sama called to them softly. Then Kané turned the face of Sono up to his and looking deep into her eyes, said, "Sayonara, O Sono San, Sayonara."

Sono replied in a voice so soft and low that he could scarce hear it, "Sayonara, O Kané San, Sayonara—for a time——"

He turned at the gateway and looked back at the young girl standing there and waved his hand. Sono waved her hand to him gayly, and Kané could not see that her face was covered with tears.

CHAPTER V

The days passed slowly to Sono after the departure of Kané. Even the old people missed his quick light step on the pathway, his eager, boyish laugh, his happy optimism that saw the world through youthful, beauty loving eyes. Inkyo Sama became quite mournful and even for a time lost his interest in the garden, now that he did not have his willing helper by his side.

At last it came time when Sono might write her first letter. She took from her letter box the long roll of paper scented with the delicate odor of *jako*, and with light swift strokes of the brush wrote:

My Kané:

It is my first letter. My first letter written to any one in the world is to you. How does one write a letter? I do not know, but I will talk to you just as if you were here by my side. You said that I should tell you all that I have done, all that I think, all that I dream the days you are gone from me. The last two will be easy to tell you, because all my thoughts, all my dreams are of you.

At first it seemed that each evening you must

come to me, that I would hear your step on the path, see you come under the gateway, and I watched for many nights as I did when you were here. Then I understood that I would not see you by the lotus pond, and I kept away from that part of the garden.

The hours are leaden, the evenings never pass, though O Inkyo Sama who understands my longing tries to interest me in many things. Last night we went to the sea to see the fishing fleet at night, and it was a pretty sight to watch the lines of torch fires in the distance, like a string of stars. But it only made me think of the many times you and I have watched the lights together. And do you remember when the old fisherman brought us the tortoise and said if we would give it a drink of saké and write upon its back "Servant of Kompiler," and recite some mystic words he told us, that it would return to the Goddess of the Sea, and she would guard us from all harm when upon the water?

But I must tell you of what I do as I pass the days waiting for your return. It is the feast of the Bon and early on the first day I spread the new rice straw mats within our Butsudan and decorated it with colored paper and lotus flowers from the pool. I wrapped the food in fresh leaves and made each hour the tea to give our dead. At sunset I went to your Honorable

Grandfather and helped him place the torches before his gateway, and together we went to the shore and watched the fires in the lanterns that will light the lost ones to their homes. We all went to the cemetery and burned some incense and poured out water for the spirits, and I placed flowers and the white lanterns beside each haka where lie the members of your family, which now, I feel within me, are mine own.

The last day of the feast, when the sea is the pathway over which the spirits must return to their shadowy homes, we went to watch the Buddha flood. All the water glimmered with faint lights gliding out to the open in the small straw boats sent out by loving hands to carry the dead back to their homes. It seemed we could hear the murmuring of voices, the speech of the souls who have gone on the long journey to the Meido. Some believe that the drowned never make that long, dreary journey. They quiver in the currents, they rise and fall in the swaying tides, they hurry after the swift sailing junks, they shout in the roar of the breakers, and O Inkyo Sama said that it was their white hands that rose and fell in the leap of the surf. But it was all pretty and I wished that you were with me to watch the tiny ships with their white paper sails on which were written the spirit names of the dead, with the thin smoke of the incense rising

in faint blue lines around it. You would have done as you did last year, tried to copy it, and perhaps you would have failed again and thrown away the chasing—and, I have never told you, but I found it and have it now amongst my treasures.

You said that you did not believe that the dead returned to us for three days each year. But I want to believe that they who have crossed the dry bed of the River of Souls on their weary journey to the Meido wish to return to us once more, that they long for the familiar home, and the faces of their loved ones.

We cannot forget because we are dead, Kané. Could you forget me and not long to see me if you were taken away from me even by the kindly Gods? You would long to come back to our home where we had been so happy, and once each year I would prepare for you the food you loved and place it on the zen before the altar. And your pathway would be perfumed by incense and your thirst taken away by tea freshly made by loving hands that once had served you.

Ah, Kané, love lives through all eternity. Mine will not die when I pass into the Land of Shadows, it will live away. I have drunk of love's cup and it will give me immortality so that I may live with the Gods to watch over thee and to care for thee.

As we were passing the little bridge on our return from the sea, we passed a woman standing there murmuring something in a sweet voice as she cast little white papers from her hand that went fluttering down the stream. I watched her for a time, wondering what she was doing. Then I understood. It was a poor woman, Kané, who had lost her baby and this was the forty-ninth day after its death and she had bought a little block on which was the picture of Jizo and the spirit name of her baby, and she had printed them on the tiny pieces of paper and was now sending them downward to the shadow world through the Sai-no Kawara where Jizo is. Each one of the hundred little papers carried a prayer that Jizo would be kind to her baby, would protect him and keep him from all sorrow. It made a quick little hurt in my heart, Kané, because it seemed to me that for the first time I could understand what mother love meant, what sorrow means when you lose the life given you by the one you love—and I went to the woman and whispered soft tender words to her and tried to let her see that I understood the pain within her heart.

Oh, Kané, do love and sorrow travel the same pathway? I sang of love before you came to me, but now I am living love and sing no more.

Thy Sono.

My Kané:

Two months since you have gone. When I think of all the months to pass—I try not to think. O Inkyo Sama says I must not live the to-morrows, nor look ahead to the days to come, but live just for the moment and that the Gods will give me patience, and the time will go before I know it. He says life is like the long flight of steps leading to the temple; when we look at them from the bottom, we think we can never, never mount them, but as we go up slowly, one by one, before we know it we are in the temple courtyard. Yet, Kané mine, if it is passed moment by moment or day by day, long is the time to one who waits.

O Nara San, O Shino San, O Také San and I went down to the sea on the evening of the cake offering to the stars. It was a clear night and we could see quite plainly the bridge over the silver river made by the magpies' wings for Ame-kugo to pass to her herd boy lover. How could the father of the Weaver Princess be so wicked as to separate her from her sweetheart, and only allow her to pass once a year to see him? The Sun cannot be always a kindly God, if he is cruel to his daughter.

There were many of us down by the seashore and it was pretty to see the returning, the lanterns flitting along like a long shimmering of

fireflies. On our way home we bought from the old aba-san some love papers, those pretty tinted things at which you laugh. But when we held them close to the lantern, the words written in the invisible ink came out, and I will not tell thee what mine said. You would laugh again—but it made me very happy for the evening. When we returned home we placed the little bowls of water between the lighted incense sticks, to show that we remembered the devotion of Ame-kujo to Kirin, her herd boy.

You should see O Také San. She has her hair done now in the maiden's knot, and she feels very grown up. Aunt Hana San, with whom she is no favorite, says, "Yes, she is a young lady now, but that which has less to grow up to, naturally grows up to its limit soon."

Aunt Hana San is ill. The new doctor says she has fever, but she knows that the Gaki-Bo-toki, from the land of cold and hunger and thirst have entered her body to get warmth and nourishment. She is quite certain of it because at first when they come she is cold and shivers, and as they become warmer, she gets warm until her body seems to burn with heat. At exactly the same time each day they return. She takes the medicine the doctor left her, but she also has the family priest and swallows the little prayer papers he rolls for her.

We have had some very hard storms and the thunder animal has left the marks of his claws deep in the great pine tree down by the waterfall. Many people have taken pieces from the tree, as it is good for the toothache. We were horribly frightened and my Honorable Mother and I sat under the mosquito netting as the thunder animal cannot get through its meshes, and Matsu burned incense, because, being a devil, he hates the smell of the holy fire.

I went up yesterday to our dell, that pretty place we found lost beneath the great shadowy silent pines at the foot of the mountain. It was so beautiful there, the hills rising softly as a prayer, and the only sound the semi on the swaying bamboo below me, which seemed to bend under the weight of their song. It looked to me like a fairy palace, as the soft white witchery of the sun filtered through the trees. I made an excuse that I wished to match my embroidery silks to the delicate greens and browns of the tree coverings, but I really wanted to be in the place where we have been so often together.

But it was lonely, Kané, without thee. I could see thee everywhere; see thee lying on the grass at my feet, half listening to O Inkyo Sama as he read to us from the poets or from the holy books, and could feel thy touch as thou wouldst take my hands from my embroidery to hold

within thine own. How happy we were! To be in the heart of a wonderful silence; to know that life is about you everywhere, although its tones are hushed to a shadowy monotone; to know that another day will bring the same sweet peace and from it will pour forth sunshine and song of birds and the golden wine of a new day!

Come back to me, I long for thee,

Thy Sono.

Kané San:

Thy letters are all in my fumi-bako and I read them and re-read them at night. Thine Honorable Grandmother also allows me to keep the letters you write her, and soon I will have to choose a larger box to hold my treasures.

We have all been to the monastery to admire the maple trees. It was beautiful there, the brilliant crimson contrasting with the deep green of the pines. The abbot and O Inkyo Sama made some beautiful verses and hung them on the trees and on the wind bells. Thine Honorable Grandfather painted a scroll and wrote beneath the picture the verse of the great poet who believed that the Gods ought to be satisfied with what nature had done for them, instead of the figures of woven silk placed before the shrine as an offering of gratitude for the glories of the trees. Dost thou remember the verse? I am afraid not, as when

O Inkyo Sama read the poets to us, you were often too busy looking into my eyes to hear what he read. Here it is for thee to remember, and thy Honorable Grandfather wrote most beautifully, although he wanted me to write the verse, as he kindly said my poor strokes with the brush were more artistic even than his own.

“ ’Tis hardly for poor me
To bring a beggar’s gift, when
Tam Keyama spreads
Miles of red maple damask
Before the glad Immortals.”

We went way up the mountain side and had our tea. The forest trees were hung with wild mosses that gave them the appearance of old age and was a little sad. The abbot gave me a carving of the three monkeys that hear no evil, speak no evil, see no evil. I did not tell him that I already had the Gods in ivory that you carved for me last year.

We came down an old pathway where there were many figures of Amida, time worn, moss grown, cut roughly from blocks of stone and placed in long rows beside the path leading to a ruined temple of the Torrent Mist Goddess. It was beautiful coming home in the twilight, the soft blue light turning into bluer darkness, coming nearer to us each moment.

When we came back to the town the lights behind the shojiis shone faintly, the samisens from the tea houses could be heard, and the two lines of paper lanterns before the houses looked like two long lines of lighted pearls. I need not tell thee what I wished, my Kané.

Four people, three old women and one old man, have asked my Honorable Father if they can use the little house that stands in the corner by the mill. They are very poor and have joined together to make a "party for making tea," as they call it, because the four can live better than each one alone.

It is dreadful to be poor and old, Kané. After I saw them I took the old bamboo for blowing the fire, put a rin into it, uttered the holy words, and took it down to the bridge and threw it far out into the stream. Thus Bimbogami is thrown out of our household, yet—when I returned I heard the ticking of the little insect that is the servant of the God of Poverty, and know his master is not far away.

It is wonderful now, although the evenings are cool. Come to me, Kané, come and watch with me the hare in the moon which is now red because of the great maple tree under which he sits. We will go to the shore and look for White Sui-Getsu who sails the moonlit waters in her



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***W**HERE there were many figures of Amida,
time worn, moss grown.*



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We wandered around the castle gardens.

rosy boat made of a single lotus petal, and who is only seen by them who truly love.

Thy Sono.

My Kané:

If you could share with me the glories of this autumn time.

We have had a long happy day in the Tamasuke gardens. I was awakened by a ray of light stealing through the shoji and went out on the veranda, and all the world seemed a fairy land. The mist rose over the valley like incense from some hidden burner and seemed to clothe it in a gown of gauze, while beyond the steep hillsides rose tier on tier, dressed in their red and gold. The graceful pines looked like children of moonlight, their dainty robes gleaming softly in the gray dawn. Soon the sky stirred with flush upon flush of rosy light; it passed from misty pearl to opal with heart of flame, from opal to gleaming sapphire. A butterfly, like a fragile blossom went flying through space, and the bees came to the flowers, leaving in their hearts the promise of another life to come.

There were eighteen of us, Mika and Sama and Také—you know all my friends—and we wandered over the winding mountain paths, searching the byways for flowers, who whispered the secrets of their scented hearts to us as we gathered them.

We tried to catch the dragon flies that flashed through the air like polished needles, but they were too swift for us. I sang for the girls, but the song in my heart was sweeter than the song on my lips, because of thee, my Kané.

We wandered around the castle gardens, and then I slipped away from them all to lie in the shadows of the great trees and think and dream and have visions all mine own. I looked up at the clouds which were only dream clouds, ghosts, and as a cloud I let my fancy drift before the wind to the never, never land. Does that land of which we dream exist but in our hearts? There are no wonders in my dream land and night would live forever in my soul if I felt that my dreams would not come true. As well might a giant move a tree, or one dip out the ocean with a shell as to tell thee all I dream. We will drift together down the river of life into the heart of a golden sunset, together, always together.

Kané, Kané, it seems that all the love of the world must be within my heart. It sings an undersong, like the murmur of a river flowing gently to the sea. In the stillness I am finding hidden treasures. A rose is blossoming within an enchanted garden. You sowed within the garden of my heart the seed of love, which will grow in strength, as trailing creepers grow in length, with each new season.

I went back to the girls at last and when the red sun went down over the mountain we started for the city. We listened to the croaking frogs that find their lodging in the rice fields, and to the ho-to-to-go-su, whose flute-like voice spoke music to the night. We stopped to watch the last rays of the sun as it touched the tops of the trees and the summits of the hills with its glory, and saw the water in the distance turn to steely gray until there came the afterglow and the sky and water were like a golden flame. We saw the coolie with his load, who slowly climbed the mountain path, and we talked to babies peering over their mother's shoulders, softly clinging at their necks with tiny hands, and a kindly peasant woman asked us in and gave us tea. We did not realize the lateness of the hour until the soft white moon rose in the sky, as if he were a watchman with his lantern, passing by to light us to our homes.

Before I entered the house I went out to the lotus pool. The evening wind blew across the hills full into my face, warm and sweet, touched with the sleepy incense of the night. It had love's touch and brought me from the Gods your dream shape to watch me through the hours.

Kané, Kané, mine, let me open the book of thy heart, and write my message therein—I love thee.

Sono.

Kané:

We have been so busy but at last the New Year is past and we can settle down to our peaceful life again. I made all the preparations for the festival instead of my Honorable Mother, who is not feeling well these days of chill.

I prepared the Heavenly Table, rose with the dawn and drew the water from the well under the first rays of light to make the first tea of the year; placed the pines and bamboo on each side of the doorway, and stretched the straw rope across the door, the well, the Sacred Shelf and the inner court, everywhere the sun could enter. Then I went to your home and helped your Honorable Grandmother, as she misses your young hands. Your Honorable Grandfather and I went to the temple and bought the little dolls, one for every member of our families, and the priest wrote the names and ages on the back. We all passed them over our bodies and said the prayers. Your Honorable Grandmother was especially careful in passing the hitogata many times over her hands as the cold makes them stiff and lame. The next day we returned them to the priest who burned them with holy fire, so for a year you can think of your Sono San and your honorable family as being well and strong.

Every one called upon us and we called upon every one. I had a wonderful new kimona of

which I was very proud, as new kimonas are scarce in the house of the Tokuwara. I was so afraid at O Taka San's home that her small brothers and sisters would put their sticky hands on me, because, of course at this time of feasting, all the babies are carrying moochi cakes. We went down to the shore in the evening and saw the 108 lanterns lighted, and listened to the 108 strokes of the New Year's bell in the temple, then we returned home, happy, tired, glad the first day was over. But there were six more to come, more calls, more present giving and more serving of tea and New Year's sweets. At the end of the festivity, my Honorable Mother, Matsu and I all were glad that New Year's only came once a year.

On the eve of Setsubun, I heard the call "Devils out, good fortune in" and knew that the old man was coming in the twilight to cleanse our house from evil spirits. He came in and rattled his Shakujo and recited the Sutra until it would have been a very bold spirit who would have dared stay after such a plain invitation to leave. Then we hung a charm before the doorway to show him that he was barred from returning.

Matsu threw dried peas about the house and the next day carefully swept them up, and when we heard the first thunderstorm we cooked and ate a few. So you see I have been most careful to

do all things necessary to entice the God of Happiness to dwell beneath our roof tree the coming year.

My Honorable Father is very much worried over money matters. He cannot pay all his debts this New Year, which he feels is a very deep disgrace, and at night my Honorable Mother says he cannot sleep. It is dreadful to be a girl and so helpless. If I were a man, as I know my father secretly wishes in his heart, I could go out into the world as you have done, and help my parents. But—I will not bring to you my bowl of sorrow.

O Miku San has been to see me. She stayed for the night and we talked as girls will, and I told her our secret, Kané. She was so interested, she could not sleep. "What is love?" she asked over and over again. "What is it like? Shall I love the man whom my parents will choose for me, as you love Kané?"

Ah, what is love, Kané? It is as hard to tell what it is as to grasp the mist upon the mountains in your outstretched hand. It is like explaining the glories of the cherry blossoms to one who is blind. It is the Golden Bridge on which we walk to the land of Happiness.

I told her that if she would wait, it would come to her. To the moon, clouds; to the flowers, wind; and to the young girl, love. She asked me

how I first knew that I loved you. I told her that our hearts spoke to each other, and from deep within us there arose a song we alone could understand, because our hearts had sung it countless times before in other lives, and we had answered as the koto answers to the hand of one who loves its music. A door is opened, a curtain drawn aside, and we peer into a new room, a room more beautiful than our imagination could ever picture. Yet—until it comes we do not realize what we have missed. It is in the perfection of the new kimona, that one learns of the shabbiness of the old.

No, I could not tell O Miku San, lying there wide-eyed, staring into the night, hearing for the first time of a wonder world, of a voice sweeter in the ears than prayers—I could not tell her what love is. Your lover sings a song that you alone can hear.

Thou mayest measure out thousands of measures of
wine
But until thou hast drunk it, no joy is thine.

Oh, Kané, I am waiting for thee as a bird imprisoned in a narrow cage waits for the door to open. Thy coming will unbar the gates of joy-land. Thou wilt love and guard me through all the happy years.

Thy Sono.

My Kané San:

I have had such a terrible dream. I arose early in the morning and whispered it to the Nanten tree, so that it would not come true.

I dream of thee each night, and they are always such happy dreams and keep by me all the day like a perfume which remains and delights. But I was frightened, and when in the early evening an old begging nun came to the gateway with such a melancholy call, I could not bear it, and in my fright, when all the rest were sleeping, I crept out of the house and went up to the hill shrine where women go to pray for the return of a loved one. As I stole along the pathway, the fireflies kindled a light to show me the way. The only sound was the plaintive call of the blind shampooer with his heavy staff in hand groping his way along the streets that were alike to him in time of darkness as in time of light. It must be sad to grow gray behind a curtained window, and I wondered if it were true that the mid-day sun shines just as softly upon the blind as upon him who sees. At the corner I met the night watchman clacking out the hours with his tune blocks. When he passed where he could not see me, I ran swiftly until I arrived at the temple.

It was dark inside with only a small lantern burning before the altar, casting weird shadows upon the gilding. I knelt and looked up into the

face, golden, smiling, expressing eternal love and tenderness, the face of the Goddess who cares for those who love. I murmured broken prayers, simply thy name again and again, but I know she understood. Oh, Kané, the Gods truly exist, they will hear my prayers. I took a stone from the little pile before the Shrine, and when you return I will take it back again with many others.

As the deep toned bell of the temple thrilled with a sad heart-penetrating sound into the night, I turned my face backward towards the guardians watching through the silent hours and felt they were guarding for me my happiness.

When I returned the sky was hung with stars and the moonlight gleamed like jewels upon the water. The pain of longing in my heart was not deadened but it was stifled. How fearful a thing is the longing for a person, Kané. Everything is clouded by the shadow that thou art far away. Each day I seem to tread the paths that lead to nowhere and climb the steps that lead to nothing, because they do not bring me to thee.

They say that love is just the gleam upon the jewel, but after all it is within the gleam that the charm of the jewel lies. What is that little poem:

Tho I have but little wine
Love makes little cups divine.

Ah, Heart of Mine, I have not *little* love for thee. I would take my life in both my hands and fling it at thy feet, if it would give thee happiness.

Thy Sono.

CHAPTER VI

When Kané had been gone a little over six months, Mr. Tokuwara came one day from his office earlier than his accustomed hour. He was plainly excited and rather elated over the news he was bringing. "His Excellency Shimoseki is coming to dine with us to-night," he announced abruptly.

Inkyo Sama looked at his son in astonishment. "Not the great Shimoseki?" he inquired.

"Yes, he himself. I have his letter here. He is making a tour of the provinces and will be here but one night and will honor us with his company."

The old man drew himself up proudly. "Honor us with his company. Honor indeed," he said with a curl of his lip. "The family of Tokuwara were great in Japan when his people were simple peasants. He is the one honored, not us."

The son laughed bitterly. "That may be true, O Inkyo Sama, and of course he does not intimate such a thing in his letter. It is most polite and he begs us for the honor of resting beneath our roof. But times have changed and we must acknowledge that it is an honor for us to be his hosts for the night. He is one of the great

officials of the Empire, one of the richest and most powerful men in our Kingdom, and we—we are Tokuwaras—but——” and he motioned with his hands expressively.

The old man flushed, started to say something, controlled himself evidently with an effort, and rising left the room. When he was gone, Yuki with the instinct of the housewife said anxiously, “Is he coming to-night, my Honorable Husband?”

“Yes, to-night,” Mr. Tokuwara replied shortly.

“But—but—how can we receive him properly? And to dinner—we have nothing to offer a great official. Our food is the food of the peasants.”

The man stopped and wrinkled his brow in perplexity. “I had not thought of that,” he said.

Yuki laughed a little tremulously. “No, man-like, you had not thought of that.” Then anxiously she asked, “Have you any money? We can send to the tea house and have a dinner prepared and brought in.”

Mr. Tokuwara walked up and down the room, his face flushed with anger and embarrassment.

“It is the end of the month,” he said, “and needless for me to tell you that I have not sufficient money with which to buy such a dinner as we should place before our guest. What shall we

do? A Tokuwara cannot give a Shimoseki a peasant meal."

The wife watched him as he strode up and down the floor, then a look of resolution came into her patient face and she rose and left the room. When she returned she carried a small package. She unfolded it and there lay an obi of gold and purple brocade. She caressed the exquisite, shimmering piece of satin for a moment, a look of sadness in her soft black eyes.

"It is the last one—the most beautiful of them all. I—I—had hoped to keep it—" she stammered—"but—but—we will send Matsu to the money lender—and we will give a dinner that will not disgrace a Tokuwara."

She hurriedly thrust the obi into the hands of her husband, and shading her eyes with her sleeve that he should not see the tears, she quietly left the room.

When the great man came to the home he found it charming with its wonderful wood work gleaming faintly under the softly shaded lights, the carved bronze brazier with its old curiously wrought kettle on the coals, the tobacco boxes covered with the lacquer that showed the artistry of ancient times. The tact and courtesy of his hosts that put him instantly at ease, showed plainly their breeding and secretly within his heart the self-made man would have been glad to have

exchanged a goodly share of his money for a little of the blood that flowed within their veins.

To the busy man from the city, it seemed as if he were in the Japan of other days, and when, according to the custom of especially honoring a guest, the wife and daughter entered to serve the meal, he felt, as much as his business soul could feel, that he had entered a place of enchantment.

He was a man about the age of Sono's father, a great strong man with a hard face and eyes that plainly said he would conquer his world. Those eyes softened when Sono knelt and touched her head to the mat before him, and he watched her closely as with easy grace she poured the saké or served the many dishes. Then, when the elaborate meal was finished, and she had daintily offered the small piece of lighted charcoal for their pipes, her father asked her to sing. She knelt before the koto and in a plaintive thrilling voice, a voice full of quaint sweet quaverings like the song of a bird, she sang the ballads of old Japan. The man was delighted and when with graceful bow she rose and left the room, he sat long without speaking, the only sound to be heard the rat-tat-tat of his pipe against the ash receiver, as he emptied it only to refill it and smoke again in silence. Finally he remembered that he was a guest and the talk was resumed, the men

discussing the affairs of the province, the condition of the old families and the new business interests that had come to the little town.

His Excellency did not see Sono again until the next morning when he took his leave, and all the family were assembled in the doorway to touch their heads to the matting in their respectful good-bys. He said nothing, but his eyes looked long at the young girl as she knelt there, the picture of youth and an idealized beauty, such as he had never seen before.

Nothing more was heard from the great man except the usual letter of thanks for their hospitality until a month had passed, when a strange man came to the doorway and inquired for Mr. Tokuwara. He was taken into the guest room, and after the usual long preliminaries of polite nothings, he said sharply:

"I come from His Excellency Shimoseki to ask in marriage your daughter Sono."

The father looked at him in amazement.

"My daughter Sono. For whom?" he asked when he could find his voice.

"For His Excellency himself," the man replied. "He feels that she would lend honor to his household by her grace and dignity and beauty."

"But—but——" stammered the father who could think of no reply to the astounding news.

"My daughter—this is an honor—but—but——"

The go-between said in his calm professional voice, "His Excellency has seriously considered the matter, and feels that it would be an honor to be allied with the great family of Tokuwara."

The men bowed to each solemnly, then the father said, "The honor is with us," and they bowed again. The man continued, "His Excellency also told me to explain to you that he would want no dowry with your daughter. She can come to him as she is to-day. He does not desire that you or your family make the usual presents nor provide the usual wardrobe. He is rich, probably the richest man in Tokio to-day, and he will be happy to provide all that is necessary for her in her new life."

The father flushed. He understood that Mr. Shimoseki knew of their poverty and realized that they could not give the many costly presents usually made to the members of a bridegroom's family by the family of the bride, nor provide the rich clothing necessary for the wife of an official. He could also see that the astute politician was not allowing this to be used as an argument against the fulfilling of his desires.

The father bowed. "His Excellency is most kind, most considerate, but—but——"

"She is not betrothed," the man inquired quickly.



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***WE** went down to the sea.*



T**HE** *swaying bamboo.*

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The father hesitated, then he said, "N-o, she is not betrothed—publicly betrothed as yet—but——"

"Then," the man said with a decisive voice, "there is no reason why she should not be the wife of His Excellency. You certainly see the advantage to you and to your family."

"Yes," the father replied, "I see the great advantage, but——" and he hesitated again.

The man rose. "I will leave you to consider the matter," he said, "to talk it over with any members of your family with whom you think fit to discuss the subject. But I would like to know your answer as soon as possible, so that His Excellency may be assured of his happiness before he goes on his tour of the southern provinces."

When Mr. Tokuwara was alone he rose and walked up and down the room. He studied the subject in all its bearings. He knew that Sono loved Kané, and he had encouraged their love. He had thought it a good marriage for her, this union of the two who had been playmates together, and whose families had been friends for many years. But now—the great Shimoseki—the man who could raise the Tokuwaras to their old time prominence; whose power could give them position and the chance for fame again; whose money could restore their nearly ruined

home. There need no longer be the dreadful struggle with poverty. No longer need to fear the first of the year when debts must be paid. He threw back his head. Why should he hesitate? It was only the youthful fancy of a boy and girl. Nothing had been decided, there had been no betrothal. She would forget Kané in a few months and would thank him for giving her this chance for riches, for a great home, for life in the city as the wife of a man honored by his countrymen. She would thank him for his firmness.

Then Mr. Tokuwara paused. He could see Sono and Kané in the garden together, could see their eyes as they looked at each other, and saw Sono blossoming as a rose under her love for the boy—he could not decide. He would consult Inkyo Sama, his father. He was really the head of the family; he should decide. The man paused in his walk. He remembered his father's love for Sono. He knew in his heart that Inkyo Sama would not consider the fortunes of the Tokuwara when weighed against the happiness of the granddaughter whom he loved.

He paced up and down the room for hours. Finally he sat down to his writing box and wrote hurriedly a few lines. He sent for Togo and when the servant entered, he told him to take the letter at once to the address upon it.

When the man left Mr. Tokuwara felt more



comfortable. He had shifted the responsibility upon other shoulders. He had called the family into the discussion. His father could, of course, go against the wishes of the clan as he was the head and his word was law, but the combined effect of the family, whom he knew would welcome this solution of their present troubles, would add materially to the argument in favor of accepting the offer.

CHAPTER VII

The next day, in the early afternoon, there was a great gathering of the Tokuwara clan in the guest room of the family home. Word had been sent from one member of the family to another that they were needed in council, and they came from far and near. Aunt Hana San, much to the astonishment and the chagrin of many, walked into the conference after they were all seated and just commencing the polite inquiries relative to the different members of the family.

"Well, I'm late as usual," she chuckled. "They say the first sweep finds the money that is lost at night. I would never find any as I am never on time—but I'm here at last."

She looked around the room at the faces that could not hide their annoyance at her presence, and she laughed, "I know you did not expect me, and I know you don't want me, but I want to know what is going on. It must be something important to get you all here, so here I am and here I remain."

She chose the most comfortable mat she could find and placed herself near Inkyo Sama, then calmly taking her pipe from her sleeve showed she was prepared to stay any length of time.



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***WE** saw the coolie with his load, as he slowly
climbed the mountain path.*



***L**OVE is a subject left to singing
girls and geishas.*

"This is not a place for women," one of the men more bold than the others ventured.

"Oh, isn't it?" she asked in her high querulous voice. "So that is you, Taka. Well, perhaps if I had known that you would be here, I would have stayed at home. Every time I see you I feel as if my foot had slithered on a toad in the dark. But I'm here and here I'm going to stay, and you may as well make the best of it."

Then turning to Mr. Tokuwara she inquired, "Well, speak up. Why have you sent for us? Not to feed us, I am sure, with the present price of rice."

The father of Sono said, "We are here to talk over the future of my daughter Sono."

They all looked up in astonishment, as it seemed an unusual proceeding to call the entire family into council regarding the future of a mere woman, but they said nothing, except Hana San who could not be kept quiet.

"What about Sono?" she asked. "She is well, I hope. She came to see me and seemed to look as all young girls look who are contented and well fed."

Mr. Tokuwara did not smile, but said in a serious voice, "We have had the honor to have His Excellency the Minister Shimoseki send a go-between here from Tokio to ask her hand in marriage."

If a bomb shell had been tossed into their midst there could not have been more astonishment and amazement expressed on the different faces. Pipes were allowed to rest on the edges of the ash receivers in the act of being emptied, as their owners looked at their host. Hands that were hovering over the tobacco pouches remained motionless in the act of refilling pipes. The consternation was so great that no one noticed the start of Inkyo Sama as he sat in his place at the head of the room. He stared at his son for a moment, then he broke the silence.

"Not *Sono*," he said, with unbelief in his voice.

"Yes, Sono," replied his son. "The man was here yesterday and wishes his answer as soon as possible."

"But," said Inkyo Sama, "Sono is betrothed to Kané. We all know that."

"No," replied her father. "Sono is not betrothed, nothing has been promised."

"But it is understood," remonstrated Inkyo Sama impatiently. "You and I understand, and so does his family know that Sono and Kané are to be married as soon as he returns from Tokio."

"Yes," replied the son. "We have thought so. But now this very advantageous offer has come, and we cannot refuse to consider it."

"We must not even consider it," said the grandfather emphatically. "Sono cares for—"

Kané. I have seen it year by year, month by month, day by day as it has grown under my eyes. We cannot make her unhappy."

"I have thought of all that," replied Mr. Tokuwara. "But Sono will soon forget Kané. It is nothing but a springtime fancy, a young girl's love, and she will be happy as the wife of a great and rich man. She would choose it herself if she were old enough to make a decision.

"Oh, she would not," interrupted Hana San. "Imagine our Sono choosing the rich husband for the same reason that the ox chooses the rich pasture, food for the day and a comfortable lodging at night. I know our Sono. We will refuse it."

The old man looked at her gratefully. "Certainly we will refuse it," he said with decision. All eyes were turned upon him angrily. "Do you realize what this will do for the family?" asked one of the men opposite Inkyo Sama.

"I realize nothing but that Sono must not be sacrificed," replied Inkyo Sama.

"It will not be a sacrifice," spoke another. "She will thank you in the end. Think what it will do for the Tokumaras. We are poor, growing poorer each year. Many of us are small officials and with the influence of this Shimoseki we can again take our place in the province.

There is no question as to what the answer must be."

Hana San looked at him angrily.

"I understand. Dumplings are better than blossoms in your eyes," she said. "If some members of the Tokuwara family would work a little harder and not expect the government to support them simply because they are Tokumaras, they would not be so poor."

The offended man pretended he did not hear her and turning to Mr. Tokuwara said in a soft voice, "I do not see why you have called us in to discuss such a simple matter; you should have decided instantly."

Mr. Tokuwara said apologetically, "It is not entirely for me to decide. My Honorable Father is the head of the family, and to him falls the lot of making decisions that will affect the entire family—and—and——"

Inkyo Sama interrupted him, an angry light in his kindly old eyes.

"You knew that I would refuse," he said. "You brought the family into council to try to prevail over me. But I still refuse." He sat back on his mat with an air of finality. Instantly there was a stir among the guests. A smooth voice spoke softly, "You should be influenced by nothing more selfish than the love of right for its

own sake, and the recognition of your duty to your family——”

Hana San interrupted him. “You got that out of a book or from a priest. What do you call right if it is not right for a young girl to have happiness?”

“But she will have happiness,” he replied.

“How can she have happiness if she loves another man?” inquired Hana San sharply.

He sneered. “What is love?” he asked in a bitter voice.

“I don’t suppose you know,” replied Hana San. “How could any woman love you? You look like an old woman who has eaten salt fish.” The old man sat back on his mat and tried to find a response, but he realized that he could not expect to vanquish Hana San in a battle of words, as she was noted for her sharpness of tongue and her utter disregard of any person’s feelings who was so unfortunate as to incur her displeasure.

There was silence in the room, then Hana San said in a soft voice. “Love? What is love? It is the thread that spins the whole of woman’s life, and weaves only the warp of man’s.”

The man sneered: “Love, a young girl’s love. It should weigh nothing in the balance. This marriage means the fortune of the Tokuwara. Money——”

Hana San interrupted him a little fiercely.

"Money? Exchange love for money? It would be like eating clay for sweet rice. None but the beggar carries riches from the world when life is past—except the love that's given and returned. Love lives through all eternity—other things are only borrowed."

"You see things as a woman—an old woman," sneered the man.

The face of Hana San flushed. "Ladyhood binds my hands or I would scratch thy face, my Honorable Cousin," she said softly. Then her voice was sharp again. "Yes, I am an old woman. I have eaten a thousand year life pill to spite some of you. But," turning to Mr. Tokuwara, "what is this Shimoseki like?"

"He is a very fine looking man," replied Sono's father.

"Is he?" she said. "Take the feather from the parrot and he looks like any fowl. I presumed you judged him by his hakama."

Mr. Tokuwara said a little eagerly, "And his courtesy is as fine as if he were of a family as old as our own."

Hana San made a suspicious little noise that sounded dangerously near a sniff. "Because he washes his hands before he comes to visit you is no sign that he is clean at home," and she gave an angry rap of her pipe against the bamboo.

"But I see you have decided. Don't think that you can persuade O Inkyo Sama or me to sacrifice Sono. The eagle may be starved but he cannot be made to eat grain," and she sat back on her mat as if the subject was finished.

A man who had not yet spoken said, "Buddha said, 'He alone is wise who sees things without their individuality,' and I am sure O Inkyo Sama will not be influenced by his personal feelings in the matter, but will consider the interests of the family. Family life has always been from time immemorial the foundation stone of our Empire, and filial piety is the foundation stone of family life. The interests of the family are always greater than the interests of the individual. O Inkyo Sama realizes that, I am sure."

All eyes were turned upon Inkyo Sama who sat with his head bowed on his chest.

"What do you say, O Inkyo Sama?" asked Hana San. "Give us your final answer and we will all have some tea and go home."

Inkyo Sama looked up at the many eyes regarding him, "I have decided," he said quietly.

There was an angry movement among the guests. Some of them rose and came over to him and talked to him in a low tone. There was no question in any of their minds but that Sono should be the bridge over which they might pass to the Land of Prosperity.

Time passed in argument. Tea was served. As the mother entered the room from time to time to serve her guests, her face told them that she was suffering in the thought of the sorrow that she could plainly see was coming to her little girl. But she realized that she could take no part in the discussion. Important matters must be left to the decision of men.

As argument after argument was brought forth, the face of the old man showed more and more keenly his distress. He began at last to realize that the clan had decided, that Sono's father had decided, and that he must agree with the decision. He even saw that they were in the right from their standpoint and that they considered that he was being disloyal to the family. Sono was but a girl, and girls from time immemorial were given in marriage to the persons chosen by their parents, were given if possible to the ones who could help the family fortunes.

Finally one of the men strode over to him angrily and pointing to the shrine in the corner of the room said in a low tense voice, "Look, O Inkyo Sama. There is our family shrine. Would you dare to open those doors, would you dare to burn the daily incense, would you dare to give the morning offering, if you allow your feelings to stand in the way of raising the family of Tokuwara? You would not dare, for fear of

the spirit of those ancestors, open the shrine to make the offering that even the poorest peasant makes its dead."

He paused, his arm pointing to the closed shrine dramatically. The old man looked up and his face was drawn and strained. "Say no more, say no more," he cried. "I can fight no more for my dear one—I submit——"

The guests settled themselves back on their mats with a sigh of relief, and satisfied smiles crept over their faces. Hana San leaned over and touched his hand softly.

"I am sorry, O Inkyo Sama," she said in a low voice. "I am sorry, but I presume you can do no more. You have done your best. A wise man like a good cook knows when the fire is out."

A gay little laugh was heard in the entrance as Sono came in from a day's outing with some of her friends. The old man started and looked towards the door.

"Who will tell her?" he whispered. "Who can be so cruel as to tell her?"

"Her father will tell her, it is his place," said one.

The father shrank back. "I think that my Honorable Father as the head of the family should tell her the good news," he replied.

"I," said the old man leaning forward. "Must I be the one to thrust a knife into her heart?"

"Yes, it is your duty," said the oldest member present. "Call her in and have it over with. She will make no trouble. She understands that the first duty of a woman is to venerate her family and to obey its commands without question."

"Let me tell her alone," Inkyo Sama pleaded.

"No," the man replied brutally. "You might change your mind. Let us all be witnesses."

The old man drew himself up proudly.

"A Tokuwara does not change his mind, nor does he need witnesses." Then he sat back again upon his mat and brushed his hands across his eyes as if trying to banish some object that frightened him.

"I cannot," he said in a low voice, "I cannot."

There was argument and expostulation from the different men present, and finally the old man put up his shaking hand.

"Say no more," he cried. "I understand. You do not need to tell me again and again that I am the head of the family. I once was proud of that fact, and I never thought that the day would come when I would wish that the Gods had taken me to the Meido, but now I had rather meet Sodzu Baba with her boat, then do what I must do. Send for Sono."

The father rose and left the room, and soon—
he returned with Sono. She saluted each mem—
ber of the family respectfully and the grand—

father motioned that she sit on the mat opposite him. She sat down, folded her hands on her knees and waited, a little smile on her lips, a wondering look in her eyes.

The old man tried to speak but his voice shook and he passed his tongue over his dry lips. Finally he said in a low tone, "Sono, a great honor, as the others think, has come to the Tokuwara." He stopped, he could go no farther.

Sono looked at him, smiled, then glanced around at the solemn faces staring at her. "Yes," she answered, as the silence made her feel that some word was required from her. "Yes."

"Yes," repeated Inkyo Sama after her, "you saw our guest His Excellency the Minister Shimoseki?"

"Yes," answered Sono with a little wonder in her voice as if questioning its connection with her.

"He has—he has—asked thy hand in marriage, Sono," faltered Inkyo Sama.

Sono looked at him in amazement. "What?" she asked as if not understanding the words.

Inkyo Sama repeated, "He has asked thy hand in marriage."

Sono looked at him a moment, then she laughed, a soft little laugh of amusement. "That old man! Why—why—didn't he ask for O Hana San? She is nearer his age."

O Hana San chuckled. "Thou art right, lit-

tle one. I'd make him a far more suitable wife."

Sono saw the smiles on the faces of all except her grandfather, and his look of distress and sorrow frightened her.

"But—but—O Inkyo Sama—it is not true—it is not real—you—you—are merely trying to frighten me——," and she leaned towards the old man anxiously.

"Do I look like a man merely trying to frighten a woman," he said in a low tone.

Sono looked into the old face, heavy lined, filled with an unutterable sadness. "But—but——," she could find no words to express her terror.

"We have decided, Sono, that you will marry His Excellency Shimoseki," he said as firmly as his quavering voice could speak.

Sono half rose from her position on the mat and her hand went convulsively to her throat. "We have decided—who has decided, O Inkyo Sama?" she asked.

"We—I—the family have decided," he replied.

Sono leaned towards him. "But thou—*thou*—O Inkyo Sama—thou art the head—*thou* hast said that I must do this dreadful thing?"

The tortured man could not look into her terrified eyes. "I—I—have also said it, Sono," he answered in a voice that she could scarcely hear.

"Thou—thou——" she repeated as if not believing him, "Thou—I do not understand."

Her father spoke to her. "You will not understand at first, but you will obey. You will be thankful in the years to come."

Sono turned to her father. "But Kané, my Honorable Father,—I am betrothed to Kané."

The father flushed angrily. "No you are not betrothed. That was nothing but a boy and girl affair, merely a friendship of children."

"A friendship—merely a friendship," she said slowly. Then she turned and held out her hands to him. "But father, I love Kané," she said.

"Love," he said impatiently. "What does a young girl know of love before she is married?"

Sono looked at him for a moment, then said softly, "But I love Kané, father, not as a young girl loves the man who has been chosen for her, but as a woman loves the man she has chosen from all the world. For one whole year he has been my every breath. My first thought in the morning was for Kané, my last thought at night was joy in the thought that I would be his and that he too loved me."

A voice spoke, "A Japanese woman should not speak of love."

She turned towards the voice. "Perhaps the Gods are punishing me for being unmaidenly—but——"

The voice again said harshly, "Love is a subject left to singing girls and geishas. What do *you* know of it?"

"Yes," said Sono, turning towards the eyes watching her. "We without it marry and without it live, and it is, unless by chance, a closed book to us. I do not know if I love Kané as your honorable wives love you—I know I think of him by day and I dream of him by night. I never want to hurt him nor cause him unhappiness. I could not speak one unkind word to him nor hold one unkind thought of him. I live only for him. I have only wanted to be what he wished me to be, and when he has taken me into his arms and whispered 'My Sono San, my dear one,' it has seemed that my heart would break with its happiness. I want to give myself to him, gladly, freely, wholly, only sorrowing that I am not better, wiser—that I have not more to give. I do not know if that is love—but if it is—I love Kané."

There was silence in the room, the men moving uncomfortably on their mats.

Sono looked at the faces before her, and eyes fell. They did not want to meet the appeal in her eyes. She turned to Inkyo Sama and held out her hands imploringly towards him. "Thou, O Inkyo Sama, thou wilt not ask me to do this."

He looked into the pleading face before him,

and his eyes were those of a man in a nightmare. He held out his trembling hand to her.

"It must be, my little one—it must be."

Sono straightened, her whole body became tense, her pallid face motionless, her very being absorbed in the thought of the terrible thing she had been told. She was quiet for a long moment. Then after looking again into the face of Inkyo Sama, she bowed her head to the mat before him. Then she rose, stood a moment looking slowly at the men below her, and raising her head she quietly left the room.

Her exit was the signal for the others to leave. They went away in little groups discussing the important subject with each other.

When all had bowed before Inkyo Sama, he sat a while, his head down, his whole body showing dejection and great weariness, a look of deep grief on his face. He rose after a time and went into the room where he felt he would find Sono. She was standing at the open shojii looking out over the sea. She did not turn at his entrance, and he went up to her and put his hand on her shoulder.

"My Sono San, my little one——" he said to her softly. Sono turned and look at him. He started as he saw the white tragic face, calm, with no trace of tears but with something within the

eyes that told of the silent acceptance of the inevitable.

"Sono, my little flower," he said, "I have taken laughter from you. It is like taking the song from the skylark."

"O Inkyo Sama," she said in a low tone, with those quiet eyes fixed on his face, seeming to stare into his very soul, "O Inkyo Sama—*Thou*—Buddha himself could not have made me believe it of thee."

Inkyo Sama moved closer to her and drew her into his arms, her head pillowed on his shoulder. He put his old face down to hers and her face was covered with his tears. She put up her hand and caressed him gently.

"Do not weep, O Inkyo Sama," she said in a dull tired voice. "I have not wept. You see no tears in my eyes."

The old man looked into her face. "Even the hunter spares the frightened bird that flies to his bosom for refuge, but I could not spare my own," he said.

She drew away from him and walked again to the shojii. There came to them the tinkle of a samisen from a tea house on the hillside below. She was silent for a few moments, then she said in a tone scarcely audible, "There will be no music in the world for me again." Inkyo Sama held out his trembling hands to her.

"Ah, Sono, Sono, do not say that. You are young; every evening has its afterglow, every sorrow its peace," he cried.

"But why should we drink so deep of the bowl of sorrow? Why should we suffer? What have we done? There is no Justice in the Gods," she said with that tone in her voice that went to the heart of the suffering man.

"The Gods know, dear one," he answered, "the dim ones that dwell beyond space, for they sit at the root of life and they feel the wrong—as a spider feels in her web when a thread is broken."

Sono turned from him wearily. "That tells me nothing, O Inkyo Sama. It does not take away my pain nor tell me why I have made love a resting place in my heart to have it now torn from my bosom. Why did I love?"

"No love is vain," he answered. "Even if it is sorrow that spins the thread—softer than moonshine, stronger than death—it is not spent in vain."

After a moment of silence she said in an undertone, "I thought that happiness meant love and that love meant happiness, but now I know that happiness and sorrow are twisted together like the strands of a rope." She turned to Inkyo Sama and watched him for a time, a questioning look in her eyes.

"But O Inkyo Sama, a goblin is not in thy soul, thou still lovest me. How couldst thou close the window in my heart that love had opened?" She turned again to the shojii and looked out at the growing twilight. She stood there for a few moments her hand resting lightly on the frame of the door, then she spoke in a low even voice that had a sad haunting tone to it.

"I will go to the shojii and look out over the city and will see the mist that falls in the valley, and the sea with its white winged boats, and I will put out my hand to touch him and he will not be there. I will be alone—no—not even alone—there will be another. Oh, Inkyo Sama," and she turned to him passionately and crept into his arms, the tears at last coming in a wild burst of weeping. "I cannot go to another—if thou commandest I can leave Kané—but I cannot go to another."

The old man caressed her until the weeping was stilled then he said, "It must be, my little one, it must be."

"O Inkyo Sama," she pleaded, "let me hope, let me believe that you will change—that you will not ask this of me, or the whole world will be as desolate as the hillside in winter time."

Inkyo Sama said softly with all the infinite love and gentleness in his voice, "Sono, I am simply a bitter gourd, fit only to be hung up but

not eaten, and when thou leavest me, poor will be my chamber and dark, and the passages will be blocked and broken and the stairway lead to nothing—I have given thee all the love of an old man's heart and I would give my life gladly for thee but I cannot. The clan has decided and it is the bitterest irony that I who love you must be the one to pierce your heart. But it must be done, my Sono. You will not make my burden heavier, my sorrow deeper than it is."

Sono drew herself from his arms, and with a weary motion of her shoulders said, "Yes, O Inkyo Sama, I will obey. I understand—I am a Japanese—you need have no fear—but—" and she looked up suddenly and a little fiercely at Inkyo Sama, "I ask one thing, I ask to see Kané. I must tell him myself—I must see him."

The old man hesitated. "Sono, Sono, you are the betrothed of another," he said. She turned on him fiercely, passionately.

"O Inkyo Sama, if I may not see Kané—alone—in the garden where we have met these many years—I swear to you on the Book of the Gods that I will let the Gods take me." She looked into his face with eyes that seemed to burn with pain and said with a low tense voice, "I must once more feel the clasp of his arms, the touch of his hands, see his eyes of tenderness, know the depth of his love."

Inkyo Sama looked at the tragic face, at the glowing eyes and he said, "I—I—— Sono, thou mayest see Kané. Shall I send for him?"

"No," answered Sono, and she moved to her writing box and knelt down in front of it. As she opened the box a faint smell of jakô came into the room. She wrote swiftly:

"I am in sorrow. The pain is too great for my woman heart. Come to me. *Sono.*"

She addressed it and handed it to her grandfather. She looked up at Inkyo Sama as she knelt there, her elbow resting on the box on her knees, her cheek in the hollow of her hand. A curious, cynical little smile played pitifully around the lips that were trying to keep from quivering.

"It will go on the same train that carries the Honorable Go-Between with the message of my Honorable Father to my future Honorable Husband," she said. "It is very appropriate and will be a lucky omen for the beginning of my new life."

CHAPTER VIII

Kané came in the early evening of the next day. He came directly from the station, and as he entered the gateway he saw Sono kneeling upon the flag stones at the edge of the lotus pool. He went swiftly towards her. As she heard his step she rose and faced him. Kané stopped. It was an unknown person that stood before him; a sad, sorrow-crowned woman, not the laughing girl he had known.

His hands went to her, touched her, drew her towards him. She went to his arms like a tired child.

"What is it, my dear one?" he said. "What is it that has come to you?"

She did not speak for a time, simply lay there quietly feeling the warmth and shelter of his arms around her. Then she gently took them from her and stood erect before him.

"Kané," she said in a low voice, "how can I tell thee. I—my people have given me to another. I—I—am going to marry the Minister Shimoseki." She said it simply, in a low even voice, as if she were announcing the fact that she was going to spend the day with a friend.

Kané looked at her as if not hearing what she said. He started towards her, but she put up her hand. "No, no, Kané. Thou must not touch me, I will belong to another man soon."

"What are you saying, Sono?" he cried. "It cannot be true. Every one knows we are betrothed. Every one knows we are to be married as soon as I return. You are being frightened over nothing."

She raised her pale face to his. "Kané," she said. "Do I look like a woman who is being frightened over nothing?"

Kané strode to her and took her by the shoulders a little roughly and looked into her face. "Tell me, Sono, tell me what you mean. I do not understand," he said.

Sono stood there and in an even unemotional voice told him of the family gathering, of their decision, and of all that she had learned since that meeting, and of the irrevocableness of that decision. Kané would not accept it.

"It cannot be," he said over and over again. "It cannot be," then he turned to her with a new hope in his voice.

"But O Inkyo Sama, he is the head. It is he who must decide. We will see O Inkyo Sama."

Sono shook her head sadly. "No, Kané, O Inkyo Sama has decided. He cannot help himself. He must sacrifice his feelings as well as

my life for the family. I understand and do not blame him. He can do nothing."

"I will see him," said Kané fiercely. "I will see him and he *must* change his mind."

"No," she said gently, "thou must not make his burden heavier to bear. He has done all that he can. He is old, he is sorrowing; thou must not trouble him."

Kané let his hands fall helplessly. "But, Sono, something must be done. What can we do? I will not submit. Something must be done."

She looked up at him and the look in her eyes made him understand more than anything she had said, the finality of the affair. "We can do nothing, Kané, but—but say Sayonara. I brought you here to say good-by to you—I demanded that much of life—as I give the rest."

She moved towards him and he took her in his arms passionately, fiercely.

"My love, my Sono, my dear one, thou art my breath, my life, my rose within the garden. I cannot give thee up. What is thy family to me?"

She put up her hand and softly caressed the face bending over her. "But I am of them, my Kané. Thou knowest that thou being a man must live and die if necessary at the command of thine Emperor. So must we women live and die if necessary at the command of those who

gave us life. We learn two words from earliest childhood—renunciation and obedience—and we learn our lesson well.”

He was quiet, and she went on in her tragic, low toned voice, “It must be, my Kané, it is Ingwa and it must be suffered. Thou wilt learn with me the endurance of a human heart.”

“But,” cried Kané, “how can I live without thee? Oh, Sono, the sun’s light seemed more beautiful when it touched thee. I have sung each day at my work, thinking, dreaming of our happiness in the years to come.”

“They were all dreams and visions, dear one,” she said softly, “only clouds that float above the earth.”

“Sono, Sono, they cannot part us. Thou art mine, have been mine through all the years, and will be mine through all eternity. I would guard thee from all things that hurt. I would have thee find thy way to my arms and finish all thy sorrows there.”

“Kané, Kané,” she said. “Do not speak so. I feel the love that is within my heart rising, rising, feel it overflow from under my eyelids. When you look at me it seems you must see each throb of my heart.”

He strained her to him. “You love me, Sono,” he whispered.

She said—and he felt the sorrow and sweet-

ness and patience of Japanese womanhood in her voice—"So long as the sun and moon are in the skies, I will love thee. My heart can never be anything but thine."

They were silent, she resting quietly within his arms, both trying to realize the tragedy that had come to break their lives. Finally she said, touching his face gently with her hands, "I cannot wish to be forgotten, Kané. It is a task far harder than trying to forget."

"Oh, Sono," he said passionately. "Forget thee, forget our love? If I were given Kingdoms, or the treasures of the hidden world were offered me to lose the memory of our love, I would laugh at their gifts. I love thee now, I will love thee always the same as to-day. To me thou wilt ever be my Sono, my love."

A smile of infinite love came to Sono's face.

"I may be still dear to thee, Kané, but not in the same way as now. There will be no more Sono for thee—there will be only a remembrance."

"I cannot leave thee, I cannot let thee go, my Sono," he murmured brokenly. "I love thee—I love thee—It cannot be."

"It must be, my Kané. I love you, I love you with all the love of my life. I would give that life for you, but—I am a Japanese, thou art Japanese—we *must* obey."

Her hands clung convulsively to him for a moment, then she drew his arms from around her and took his face between her hands and looked into his eyes.

"Let me look at thee, Kané, let me remember."

There was quiet between them, as she seemed trying to imprint every loved line of his face upon her memory. Finally she let her hands fall to her side and said in a low voice, "Come, thou must go, dear one. I will walk to the gate with thee for the last time."

They turned and walked slowly towards the gate. As they reached it Sono stopped and pointed down the moonlit street.

"There is thy way, Kané," she said.

The boy looked into the white face, stepped outside the gateway, then returned, took the girl into his arms and strained her to him passionately. He turned and walked hastily down the street, not daring to look back at the figure standing beneath the gray-roofed gateway.

Sono watched him as he walked down the narrow street. When he neared the end where he would soon pass from her view, she knelt upon the stone flagged path, the moonlight streaming on her pale, young face, and stretching out her arms despairingly towards the retreating figure, cried,

"Sayonara, O Kané San, Sayonara."

PART III





CHAPTER I

Sono went to Tokio to the home of one of the richest and most influential men in the Empire. The house over which she was to preside had been the Yashiki of a famous Samurai, and was one of the most beautiful residences in Tokio. She was surrounded with every luxury that money could buy, and there were many servants to wait upon her. She found her wardrobes filled with beautiful clothing, silken kimono, obis of rare brocades, all the expensive paraphernalia belonging to the toilet of a woman of wealth and position.

When clothed in her exquisite gowns, Sono was a very beautiful woman, with her slender young grace, her warmly cream complexion, colorless, yet suggestive almost of a glow with the flame of passion behind it. She was a model wife, waiting upon her husband, serving him with her own hands, making everything comfortable for him in his home. She bade him a charming farewell as he went to his office in the morning, and was always at the entrance to welcome him in the evening. If any criticism could be made of her, it was that she was a little too

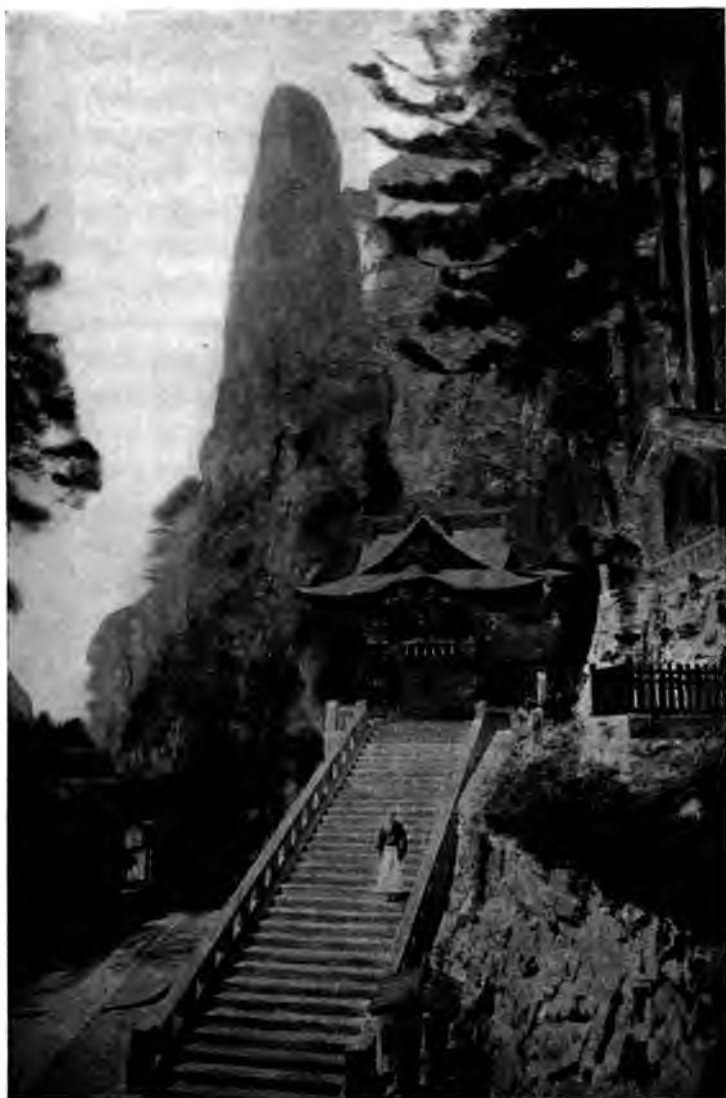
calm, a little too placid, her politeness a trifle too exact, and that her quiet, high-bred face showed no emotion. But this was no fault in the eyes of her husband, who was a very busy man and not given to studying the moods of women. He always found Sono at home, charmingly dressed, ready to receive his friends with that exquisite grace that was the birthright of the class to which she belonged. Minister Shimoseki was very proud of his wife, proud of her beauty, her tact, her courtesy, and each day congratulated himself on the wisdom of his choice.

The many relatives of her husband came to visit Sono and she returned their visits. She went with them to resorts famed for the blossoming of cherry trees in the springtime, or the crimsoning of maples in the autumn. No one hearing her well modulated voice praising the beauty of the blossoms, or seeing her quiet unemotional face as she admired the long line of trees, could imagine that a storm was surging in her heart; that each petal seemed to speak to her of other days. The flower scented air carried her back to the monastery gardens, and she could hear Inkyo Sama talking in his old man's way about the fleeting beauty of the flowers, comparing them to the passing joys of life. She could see Kané lying at her feet, gazing up at the masses of bloom, trying to fix them in his mem-



S*HE* went with them to resorts famed for the
blossoming of cherry trees.

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***T**O the Temple on the mountain side.*

ory, afterwards to be reproduced upon silver or ivory. She could feel the touch of his hand as he turned to her, see his upturned laughing face, as something said by Inkyo Sama would amuse them.

The first time they took her to a lotus garden, her impassivity fell from her. When one of the beautiful pink blossoms that she loved so well, and that was entwined so inextricably with the happiest hours of her life, was put into her hands, her face became pallid, and she begged to be allowed to go by herself for a time. She went to a secluded part of the garden, where she threw herself upon the grass with a little moan, beating her hands upon the soft sod, praying wordless prayers to the Gods to help her in her sorrow. She pressed the cool lotus blossom to her face and whispered to it in heart-broken voice.

“Oh, flower, hear me if thou hast a soul. When one sorrows as I am sorrowing, how canst thou bloom?”

But when she returned the storm had passed and no traces of its ravages were to be seen upon her calm face.

But Sono did not forget. She remembered the walled-in garden with its winding paths, its pool with swarming gold fish, the cooing of the doves, and the musical songs of children at play; the afternoon shadows upon the long quiet

streets, the long line of lantern fires upon the nights of the temple festivities; the light of the moon upon the water, the clapping of hands in the Shinto Temple, the endless merry pattering of geta. She saw it all in the quiet of the rooms where the sun blazoned a frieze of red and gold across the room, or the moon streamed in to paint the trees in inky wavering shadows, and the stars flashed their messages to her as she lay and dreamed with open eyes until the dawn was gray.

The sound of a bell in the evening took her back in memory to the temple on the mountain side, or the plaintive voice of the blind shampooer as he called in the twilight, awoke an echo in her heart, and pain woke from slumber and became the pain of old. She remembered the past as the perfume of the plum blossom came to her. Each delicately scented wind rushed to her with the odors of Spring, touched her blood and started from closed cells of memory the shades of all she was striving to forget.

But the dawning of Sono's real day was the breath of motherhood. She became the mother of a son, and a new pulse of life began to beat warmly in her veins. As the great kite flew above the house to announce the joyful tidings, Sono lay on her soft futons and looked into the black eyes that were to mean all the world to her. The

beauty and the wonder of mother love was hers. It was the inherited love of myriads of millions of dead mothers that had been treasured up in one life. It was shown by the infinite tenderness of the look of caress which came to her eyes when she gazed on her boy, the infinite sweetness of her voice when she spoke his name. He repaid her for all that she had given, all that she had lost. Her doll in her childhood days, the love of her girlhood—everything was given back to her in the person of the small being by her side. Life began again for her. In her heart were renewed again the old joys of love.

Her husband was a cold, hard man, one on whom it would be impossible to lavish affection, even if she had loved him. Her only feeling for him was a certain amount of respect for his intellectual qualities and a little fear of his sternness. Often she thought, as she looked at him, of Inkyo Sama's description of a good man. "Virtue in a man is like the bamboo stem, knotty and straight, but hard." But this son, this small man child sent to her by the kindly Gods, was hers to love, to caress, on whom she could lavish all the tenderness of a loving, affectionate heart.

Sono lived for her boy. He was not given over to the care of nurses, but was with her constantly. It was she who taught him his first baby words, his first prayers to the Gods. She

took him with her on all her little excursions, and with him beside her she could stand by a lotus pool, or watch the shimmering of the fire-flies without that quick pain at her heart that told her she remembered. He took the place of her lover of the past. She went with him to see the things that she knew Kané would enjoy. She talked to him as she would have talked to Kané, feeling that he understood her, that he would not laugh at her old fashioned imagery, because she had passed to him her love for the beautiful. She did not realize it, but instinctively she was trying to mould him into what she felt Kané's son would have been, a lover of the ideal—an artist.

Taro passed through the successive stages of ambition from the time when he wanted to become a motor man on the street car, to his first year in the university when he was filled with a wild ambition to reform the world. Sono followed him through his boyish dreams sympathetically, he knowing that he could always come to her and tell her of his pleasures, his desires and dreams, because she understood. He talked over with her his triumphs and defeats on the athletic field, his troubles in mathematics, his dislike of certain professors, his hero worship of others—and he was always sure of a sympathetic audience.

Sono was more than mother to her son, she

was his comrade. To his father Taro gave the respect due his father, but he adored his mother.

Time passed. Taro became a strong, handsome boy, towering head and shoulders above his little mother. He passed through the different grades of school until he entered the university. He was a good student, but not a bookworm in any sense of the word, infinitely preferring the athletic field to the school room. To Sono he owed his religious training. She read to him from the Sacred Books and taught him the legends and stories of the Gods as she had learned them in her childhood from Inkyo Sama. Taro had a healthy tone of skepticism in regard to certain forms of popular belief, as his scientific education destroyed his credulity in old superstitions. The outward forms of Buddhism and Shintoism affected him but slightly, yet the deeper religious sense, which underlies all symbolism, remained with him, owing to the careful teaching of his mother.

Sono was proud of her boy, proud of his handsome face and manly figure; proud of his happy enthusiasms, his clean, boyish mind that was always looking upon the morning of life. His quick infectious laugh brought an unconscious smile to her lips, a happy light into her eyes. His affection, his tender, endearing ways when

alone with her, filled a long felt want in her heart and made her blossom again as she did when a girl under the influence of that magic potion—love.

CHAPTER II

Times were tense in Japan. The whole nation realized that they were only biding their time when they could revenge themselves upon Russia for her interference at the time of the Peace Settlements between China and Japan, when Japan was forced to return the captured provinces to China, which she felt unjustly deprived her of her legitimate spoils of war. But they realized that their navy was too weak to enter the conflict with the White Country from the North, so they waited with the patience of an Oriental race.

But the leaders in Japan were watching their enemy's every movement. They saw her coming closer, closer—watched her progress through Manchuria and said nothing. But when Russia aimed a dagger at Japan's heart by her aggressions in Korea, they knew that the time had come to strike. They realized that if they wished to preserve their national security, Korea must not fall under the sway of a foreign power. They felt they were only going into a just war—they were safeguarding their independence. Japan had ever before her eyes the lesson of Asiatic

nations subjugated by western powers. The Spaniards in the Philippines, the Dutch in Java and Sumatra, the British in East India, the French in Indo-China, and the Russians in Siberia. Japan was the only country in Asia which had remained independent by her own military prowess and political ability, and she must guard that independence by every means in her power.

For ten years, Japan's navy yards and her arsenals had been working night and day; her army had been enlarged and trained to the last point of efficiency; her navy ranked as one of the greatest in the world, and she was ready for the conflict.

Things grew more and more serious. The whole nation was in suspense, anxious for the spark that would start the conflagration for which they so eagerly waited. Ohara Takeyoshi, a young lieutenant of militia, killed himself by hari-kari, leaving a letter stating the reason of his act—the hope to force public recognition of the danger to Japanese independence from the growth of Russian power in the North Pacific.

Finally the storm burst and war was declared. The whole country went war mad. It was the day for which they had patiently waited and prepared these ten years.

The enthusiasm was universal with not a dis-



*WITH him beside her she could stand
by a lotus pool.*



THE Buddha of Kamakura.

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senting voice. Everything was done to keep the fire of patriotism and loyalty burning in the breasts of the people. Men at once set to work writing histories of the triumphs of Japan, and these histories, issued to subscribers in weekly or monthly parts and profusely illustrated, were sold in every city, town and hamlet. It was shown that no foreign invader had ever set foot upon the sacred soil of Nippon.

Yoshitune, the great hero of the olden time, was carried in effigy at all the festivals; his pictures were painted on the children's kites, on fans, and lanterns. The toy makers put on the market legions of mechanisms representing Russians in flight, being cut down by Japanese troops, tied together as prisoners, or begging for mercy to victorious generals. The children had figures in clay, wood, paper or silk, of Japanese cavalry, infantry and artillery, and models of men-of-war. There were toy guns, millions of toy swords, and countless tiny bugles. Colored prints were sold with caricatures of the foreigners; pictures showing the capture of a band of Russians by one unarmed Japanese.

In the theaters romances of war were played and the street story-tellers recited the histories of the heroes of ancient Japan, and excited the people to emulate them. Immense illuminations of paper lanterns, lettered with phrases of

loyalty and patriotism, were shown everywhere—in the shops, along the streets, and even in the homes. Where the soldiers were to pass the streets were illuminated night after night, and the residents subscribed for flags and triumphal arches. Patriotic words were inscribed on dishes, on the silken linings of men's overcoats, on women's kerchiefs, in the embroidery of girdles and in the children's holiday dresses. Even the blue and white towels were stamped with patriotic phrases intended to incite the user to loyalty to the Empire. Scenes of battle were on tobacco pouches, on sleeve buttons, in designs on women's hair pins, on the women's combs. Tiny bunches of tooth picks were sold in the streets, each piece of wood having inscribed upon it a little poem of the war.

There was never the least doubt of victory in the minds of any one. They went into the war with a feeling of self-confidence created by their repeated triumphs, aided by the contempt they felt for everything in the Western world. All believed that Japan could as easily overpower Russia "as a peasant could roll up an old mat and carry it away under his arm." The patriotism of every one from the highest to the lowest was unbounded. No Japanese commander going to the front would ever dream of surrendering, no ship would ever strike its colors.

The women were as enthusiastic as the men. They went in great crowds to the station to see their husbands, sons, and fathers leave for Manchuria, and they chanted a little song that would have done honor to the Spartan mothers of old.

"Come back to us victorious," they sang, "or let us place your spirit name within the shrine." There were even a few cases where it was reported that wives and mothers had killed themselves that their husbands and sons might be free to go to the war. In the schools where the children began the day by singing the national anthem, when asked what was the dearest wish of their heart, they answered with one voice, "To die for His Majesty the Emperor."

The three emblems of Japan given to the Emperor Jimmu as keepsakes after he had conquered the world, and conserved at the great shrine of Isé, were to be seen everywhere. The sword, to typify strength and war shrewdness; the crystal, emblem of the justice by which the first was to rule; and the mirror which was to reflect the purity of the deeds of others. These, it was said, had been the attributes which had upheld the dignity and nobility of Japan, and which would again uphold it.

The Shinto temples reverberated with the sound of prayers. This religion is the patriotic soul of Japan, and everything was done to make

its flame burn higher, brighter, in the breasts of all, from prince to peasant.

The Shokonosha Festival came in the midst of the greatest excitement, and all the world flocked to the grounds to take part in the worship of the souls of those who have fought for the Emperor during the period of restoration. The place was crowded for the three days. The first day the representative of the Imperial house presided at the service, on the second day the army and the navy conducted the worship, but the third day was given over to the people. After the religious service, where the offerings of rice cakes and flowers were made, prayers chanted and hymns sung, the games commenced on Kudan Hill. Wrestlers were there from all parts of Japan; contests in jiu-jitsu took place, fencing, running, jumping and other manly exercises. If the departed spirits of the warriors could look down on the hill, surely their martial souls must have delighted in the friendly contests of men who were so soon to take part in a real warfare, to fight one of the greatest countries on earth.

Taro took part in all of the sports, and came home each evening, his eyes glowing, filled with the fire of battle. He brought home each time some placard or a paper that had been distributed on the grounds to incite the people. Once

it was a picture of a soldier in the Chinese War who fell by the wayside when his comrades were about to storm the breastworks, and who killed himself to wipe out the stain. At another time it was the picture of the young girl who traveled from Tokio to Kioto and there committed suicide, merely as a vicarious atonement for the incident which had caused shame and grief to the Emperor, when an attempt was made on the life of the Tsarawitch who was traveling in Japan.

Taro wanted to enlist, he wanted to go to the front, and he rebelled at the thought that he was under age. "Only a year, Mother," he would say, "I am only a year too young."

"But you can wait the year. If the war is not over then you may enlist," said the mother, with a feeling of hope that before that time the war would be finished.

"But I want to go now, Mother. I must go now. In a year perhaps the war will be finished and I shall not have had a chance to take part in Japan's victory. I must go."

When he saw the regiments march past he was wild. He would come home and pace up and down the tatami, and talk in boyish anger over the fate that left him at home when other boys, his friends, were away fighting for their country.

With a crowd of students from the university he went on a visit to the Temple of Hachiman,

the God of War at Kamakura, and visited the spot where the great Nitta commanded the sea to go back that he might cross to his enemy. When the boy returned the fighting spirit was aroused more than ever, and the final result came when the city was placarded with the words of Admiral Togo on the eve of sailing for his battle with the Russian fleet.

"We sail to-night," the placards read, "and our enemy flies the Russian flag." That was all, but on the placard was the picture of the Admiral pointing to a small tray placed on a table in front of his officers, and on that tray lay the short dagger which in former times was used to commit hari-kari. Every Japanese in the Empire understood the hidden meaning of the picture.

"See, Mother," said Taro, as he showed her the placard. "That is Japan. We will never give up until the hated shadow disappears from the face of the Eastern waters. We *will* win. We are not like the Russian, we know why we are fighting, we are not blindly obeying officers who drive us into battle. We are fighting for Japan and for our Emperor. Mother, I *will* go."

The next day he did not return home until late and he came with a light in his eye that made Sono look at him anxiously.

"What hast thou done, Taro?" she exclaimed. "What hast thou done?"

"I have enlisted, little Mother," he said happily. "I went to General Nogi himself, and he saw me because of my father, I presume, and he has taken care of me. I am going into training to-morrow, and little Mother, perhaps within three months I can go to the front. Anyway within six months."

Sono looked at the boyish, eager face before her and for a moment she could not see it. It seemed that the world stood still, that she was dead and did not feel. Her boy to go into that awful carnage of which they were hearing day by day; to be wounded, to lie in pain between those great battle lines; to be unattended while suffering, dying alone there on that cold dreary plain; to be buried with hundreds of others in a long trench or to be one of the many to make up a huge funeral pyre, her only recompense for his life a little white rescript from the Emperor pasted over her doorway to show that she had given a life for His Majesty. No! No! She could not bear it. She could not look into the boy's eyes. She took his arms from around her and went quietly into another room, where she could be alone to think over this new tragedy that had come into her life.

She sat thinking far into the night. She tried

to feel that she was glad that her boy was so patriotic, that he was doing his duty by going to fight for his country, that she was doing her duty in allowing him to go. She tried to remember the countless wives and mothers who had given their husbands and sons for the honor of their country. "But," she said, "they perhaps have other children. I have only Taro. They perhaps have husbands whom they could love who can console them in their sorrow. I have only Taro."

For days she could not resign herself. For days she could not bear to look into Taro's eager, happy face. She felt she could not send him, she would not, but—as the days passed she saw she must yield to the inevitable, and at last she became the Japanese mother, willing to renounce all for others, even her boy. One night after she had lain wide-eyed, staring into the darkness, she realized her duty, and she also realized that she was not altering Taro's determination to go to the war, but that she was making him unhappy, by her very evident distress. So she rose and crept into Taro's room. He heard her light step and flung his arms around her as she knelt beside the futon.

"Oh, dear little Mother," he said, "I do not want to pain thee, but thou must see. We must give all for Japan. We must win, and each per-

son must give all that he has. I have only my life; I must give it if necessary. You have me; you must give me. It is our first war with a Western nation, and we must show them that Japan is invincible. They must not conquer us. They call us 'little yellow men.' Let them learn that the little yellow men can conquer the world. It is our only chance to make the foreign nations respect us, allow us to take our place in the world, and we must show them this time, little Mother, we *will* show them, we'll never give up, they can never beat us, NEVER."

Sono pressed her face against the hot excited cheeks of the boy. "Dear one, I see that thou hast been talking with older heads than thine, and with the hot youths at the school, but—but—I also understand that we must give all, our life blood, our hearts for our Japan. I—I—send thee, Taro, and—and—thou wilt see no more tears in my eyes. I will send thee with a smile."

Taro went into training and impatiently waited for that word "advance." His regiment watched for the word as drought suffering farmers watch for the sign of a rain cloud in the sky. They offered "advance prayers" as the farmer offers "rain prayers." Taro talked of nothing but the time when he should be called out. What division was sent to-day? What one will have its turn to-morrow? How long shall we

have to wait? He chafed at the idea of arriving on the scene after the other divisions had borne all the burden of the first struggle.

At last his division received the long-looked for orders. "Ordered to the front, Mother," he shouted when he entered the house. "We're ordered to the front at last."

Sono's hand went quickly to her throat, and she turned a pale face to her boy who was in a frenzy of excitement. That night several of the friends of Taro came to see him, and a sort of spiritual electricity seemed to permeate the whole company. Every one, both soldiers and civilians, wanted to fight the whole of Russia single-handed.

As Taro went to his regiment the next morning, the neighbors who had heard the news gathered at their doorways to wish him good luck.

"Good luck to you," they called. "We'll take care of your father and mother."

"All right, all right," he answered gayly. "I'll bring you a dozen or two of the Ruskies' heads when I come back."

Another called, an old man who regretted that he was past the age for service, "Don't get sick, O Taro San. Die on the battlefield."

"Perhaps I'll not come back. Be happy with me if you hear I died in battle. But remember I'll die singing the Kimega-wo," he answered.

On the long-looked-for day, Taro's regiment was ordered to assemble on the parade ground at six o'clock in the morning. When the morning cannon roared out its call, Taro jumped from his mat, donned his uniform, bowed to the East where the Emperor resides, solemnly read his proclamation of war, and told His Majesty that his humble subject was starting for the front to fight for him and for Japan. Sono sat behind him as he offered his prayers before the family shrine, and as he rose she took his hand and looked into his face.

"Thou art no more mine own, nor thine own, Taro," she said. "Thou belongest now to thy country and to thy Emperor. For His Majesty's sake thou wilt go to help save the nation, ready to bear the crushing of thy bones and the tearing of thy flesh. Disgrace not thy ancestors by an act of cowardice."

She then took down his sword which had been placed in the family shrine and fastening it to his belt, said: "The sword is the soul of the Samurai. Wear it with honor, Taro, as the men of thy race did before thee."

His father came to him. "For your death your father is ready, Taro," he said. "But add a flower of honor to our family name by service, by your life if necessary."

Then Sono handed him the farewell cup of

water, and after a quick embrace, Taro left the door. As he was part way down the path he turned and saw his mother standing there, and the fire of the warrior was drowned in the love of the boy. He turned and came back quickly to her, and taking her in his arms drew her head to his shoulder.

"Oh, little Mother mine," he said softly, "I love thee. Thy face will be with me, even on the battle line. Thou art deep within my heart, and if I don't come back to thee, thy name will be the last on my lips."

Sono clung to him as if she could not let him go. "My Taro, my baby, my boy. I cannot send thee. I cannot see thee go. Come back to me, Taro, come back to me. Thou art all that I have. Come back to me."

He gently stroked the face down which the tears were flowing. "I will come back, little Mother. Many come back, perhaps the Gods will favor me. Thou must not sorrow, dear one. It makes a coward of me to see thy tears."

Sono tried to brush the tears away, and said, "Go—go—Taro, before I repent and say things that will make thee ashamed of thy mother. But—oh, Taro mine—I am giving my all. I am a mother and I am giving my only son—I am giving my all."

"It is for Japan, Mother mine," said Taro.

"We must give all. Sayonara, little Mother, Sayonara."

And with a last embrace and with quivering lips, Taro turned and went hastily down the pathway.

Sono listened that morning for the sound of marching feet as the men marched to the landing place where they were to be taken to the transports that lay in the bay. Then, with her husband and his relatives and friends she joined the throng that had assembled to see the men start on their long trip to the plains of Manchuria.

Everything was excitement. War hymns were sung by groups of children, flags were flying, "banzais" called over and over again. Old women bowed with age, with their beads in their hands mumbled prayers and said, "Our Buddha will care for you. Do your best for us, soldiers of Japan."

As the men descended into the boats waiting to receive them, the trumpets sounded, and old and young, waving the national flag, shouted "Banzai, Banzai" in a thunder-like chorus. It rose from the heart like the cry of a great nation cheering on its men to a certain victory.

CHAPTER III

Sono went back to her home dazed. She looked around the empty rooms, she mechanically picked up the articles Taro had left strewn around the room, arranged them neatly, folding the clothing and putting it away. She seemed to hear above all other sounds the marching of many feet, could see Taro as he entered the boat and waved her a last good-by. She could see his eager, boyish face stand out from the thousands who were with him, who were doing the same as he, waving a gay farewell to fathers, mothers, wives and sisters left on the shore. But the others did not interest her; it seemed that she, she alone was the only mother in Japan who was seeing her boy go away from her.

The servants came to her for the orders for the day and she looked at them stupidly. How could they go on in the usual routine of the day! How could she discuss with the cook the purchase of fish, the question of the vegetables to be ordered! But, with the instinct of the housewife strong within her, although feeling that it was all so useless, she took the keys and went to the storeroom and superintended the giving out

of the day's supplies. Then her hair dresser came and mechanically she sat down and submitted to the long operation of having her hair made into the usual elaborate coiffure, while her mind was with those ships sailing out to sea, starting for that bleak, desolate country to the North, carrying her boy, no one's boy but hers. She hardly heard the chatter of the garrulous hair dresser, who was pouring all the petty gossip of her circle into the unhearing ears of the woman sitting so quietly before her.

When the woman went away, Sono rose and wandered from room to room. She again went to Taro's room, looked at the familiar walls, took the flowers that were dying from their vase in the Toko-no-ma, straightened the kakemono over it, took the mat on which Taro had been sitting and placed it with others in a corner, and arranged his brushes and paper in his writing box. Then she opened the sliding door of the closet in which Taro's clothing was stored, and mechanically began to look over his wardrobe.

Here and there were articles that needed repairing. She would call the sewing woman and have them mended so that all would be in order when Taro returned. She stopped, her hands resting upon the clothing in her lap. When would he return? Would he ever return? She put that thought from her. Of course he would

return. Many did not, many were left there on the plains of Manchuria, but *her* boy, he who so loved life, would return. Yet the thought had struck deep within her heart. She could no longer bear to look at the heaps of clothing, so she folded them quickly and piled them neatly in the closet. She would not speak to the sewing woman to-day. It could wait.

She rose and began again that endless wandering from room to room, and she looked in surprise at the servant who announced that her luncheon was served. Must she eat? Evidently it was expected of her, and she mechanically ate the food placed before her, being served by the quiet maid who eyed her mistress with a little curiosity, wondering at the look on her face, at the staring eyes, at her absolute silence.

After the meal Sono went to her room and tried to read, but found herself staring at the book without turning a page. Then she gave up and threw herself upon the tatami and buried her face in her hands. It was all wrong. War was wrong that took her boy from her, that sent him to a far away country to face death. Mothers should not bring sons into the world, should not suffer for them, watch over them, give them their very life that they might be taken away like this at the command of a few men, who themselves stayed at home and were safe. It was

cruel, it was unjust. Mothers' hearts should not be broken in this manner. She lay there, her mind alternating between rebellion and despair. She did not realize that there were many other mothers who were suffering as she was suffering. Her sorrow was a personal sorrow; no one else was considered.

Finally a shojii was carefully opened and a servant announced that it was the hour for the arrival of the master. She rose and remembered that she had not changed her gown, but she told the maid who came to dress her that she would make no change that evening. The maid stopped her as she was leaving the room and asked if she might go home that evening, as her brother had gone with the division. Her mother was a widow and would be lonely this first night. Sono stared at her. So other mothers had sons who had gone away that day, other mothers would be lonely this first night. She gave her consent and the maid went away. Then hearing the outer shojii being opened, Sono went to the entrance to welcome her husband.

She looked at him as he entered in his customary manner, giving the usual greeting to the assembled servants. His face was impassive, except for the little lines of worry between the eyes, lines brought by the stress of the times to all

men who were in the Ministry and directing the affairs of the country through its peril.

He went into his room and Sono followed, bringing him the kimona which he always exchanged for the European clothes he wore while in his office. He chatted pleasantly of the news of the day, told her of the number of men embarked, the gossip of the office; then, his servant bringing him the evening paper, he became immersed in it until the time of the evening meal.

He ate heartily, glancing from time to time at the paper which was beside his table, giving her little scraps of news. Having finished they went into his room where he found some papers and began to work. After a time men from the foreign office came to see him, and Sono left him and went to her room.

Sono felt that her husband was heartless, that he did not feel. He had mentioned Taro only in an incidental manner, as if he were merely gone for the day. She did not realize that beneath that calm manner which was his habit, her husband's thoughts were also with the ships that were carrying away his only son. But he looked at the war with larger eyes than did Sono. It was a war in which his country was engaged, not only his son. It was a bigger thing to the man; Taro was only one cog in the great wheel. Manlike he saw it from the socialistic standpoint.

Sono, womanlike, saw it from only the individualistic standpoint.

Sono slowly undressed while the maid spread the futons, placed the night light, saw that the coals were alight on the hibachi and the kettle filled with water, placed the tray with the tea cups near the head of the futons, then touching her head to the floor, noiselessly left the room. Sono lay down. Her ears heard every sound of the house. She heard the wooden shutters slip into their grooves, heard the murmur of voices from her husband's rooms, the servants going to bed, and then after long hours of listening, heard the men leave the house and her husband call for his servant, and knew that he was preparing to sleep. But sleep would not come to her eyes. She lay wide-eyed staring into the darkness, seeing Taro being carried farther and farther away.

CHAPTER IV

Then began for Sono days of endless waiting, days that seemed to have no end. She watched anxiously for the news boys who, with their little bells attached to their girdles, ran swiftly through the streets announcing the latest extra, and hurriedly sent a servant to buy the paper. She read with trembling lips the account of a battle, wondering if Taro was one of the many who "so bravely charged the trenches" or, what was almost unendurable, wondering if he could be one of those who made up "our losses were great." Yet she could not believe that her son would be injured. She could adapt herself to the thought that there was danger for other sons, but not for hers.

Sono would not go out, would not see her friends, did not want to hear the war discussed. She did not realize it, but she feared to hear from others of the losses that had come to their homes. She occupied herself during the day with her household duties, and passed hours sitting by herself thinking of Taro. At night she would place his kneeling cushion in its accustomed place, and set before it little meals served on a dainty lac-

quered tray; miniature meals such as are served to the spirits of the ancestors and the Gods. Before removing the table she always lifted the little cover of the soup bowl to see if there was vapor on its surface. When the tiny drops could be seen, she felt that her boy was safe, as no steam arose on a spirit bowl if the absent one were dead.

As time passed and she thought she should receive word from Taro, she began to watch for the postman like a girl waiting for a letter from her lover.

At last it came. With trembling hands she opened it, and at first could not see the words, but it was enough for her that her hands could hold and caress the paper that Taro had touched. When she became more calm, she read:

Mother Mine:

With those cheers ringing in my ears, seeing your white face and quivering lips trying to shout Banzai with the rest, that first night sleep did not come to me. When we passed through the Straits of Shimonoseki, we took our last view of Nippon, and over all there came a silence. We watched until the last faint glimpse of land was lost to sight, and I am sure many within their hearts said as I did, "Sayonara, dear Nip-

pon, Sayonara," and wondered if it would be an eternal Sayonara.

But the next day all was gayety and laughter again. No one would know that all those men were going to the war fully prepared to suffer agonies and sacrifice their lives for their Emperor and their country, with the determination of true soldiers, ready to die, never to come back again if the sacrifice would help Japan's cause.

But we passed the time in games. Every one tried to bring out his hidden accomplishments for the amusement of the others. We told stories and jokes, sang, danced, wrestled and even imitated the street story tellers, using knapsacks as book rests and playing with a fan as does the professional reciter. All on the voyage, both men and officers behaved like one large family, and vied with each other to entertain and help pass the time. The officers treat the men like their children, and the men return their kindness with an absolute devotion and would follow them wherever they should lead. There is no fear that a Japanese soldier will have to be forced to obey his officer's commands; he will obey through love.

We were all eager to arrive and be in the game, and when at last we stepped foot on the peninsula of Liaotung, it seemed that we were treading on the land of promise, yet it looked like nothing but an endless expanse of monotonous



THE long operation of piling her hair
into the elaborate coiffure.



A *LITTLE girl, her face worn and troubled.*

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waste land, a deserted sand plain. Compared with our beautiful Japan, it was a desolate wilderness. We were surrounded by a crowd of natives with horses and wagons eager to get work, and we learned from them that the Russians had retired to Port Arthur. How disappointed we were! We wanted to fight at once, but we must wait. I slept for the first time, Mother, on the ground, but I slept as well as upon my soft futon at home.

Just before dawn we were awakened by thunder that was not thunder but the roar of cannon, and the sky was filled with red that was not lightning but flames of fire. It was a great battle ahead of us, and we were crazy with joy and excitement to think that soon we would be in the midst of it. But we were not ordered ahead, and were nearly driven frantic watching it from a distance, as if it were merely a fire on another side of the river.

But finally, the word came and we started forward, as fast as we could, fearing that we would be too late. We went through village after village, mile after mile, covered with dust and perspiration, our water bottles empty, our throats parched and dry, almost suffocated with the fine sand that rose in a cloud round us, but not a man out of rank. We stopped coolies and asked eagerly, "Is Nanshan holding out?" and


at the answer, "They are fighting yet," we hurried on, hoping that it would not yield before our arrival. Finally we were told that Nanshan had fallen and that we must fall back and await further orders. How tired we were then! Our feet seemed like lead. We did not know that we were tired or that our feet burned as we hurried forward, but to go back! We could hardly drag one foot after the other.

Later a company of men who had taken part in the fight came to us. They seemed to us younger boys crowned with glory, and we felt like country people who had missed the train. We envied them as we saw them with clothes torn and blood stained, their bodies covered with fresh wounds. We even admired their dust-covered caps and blood-stained gaiters. We were real hero worshipers, and the men laughed at us as they saw the awe in our eyes. One old man said, "Oh, you boys will have your time soon. The war is not over yet. There will be plenty of Nanshans for all of us."

What a hell is war, Mother. When one has once seen a field over which has passed the storm of battle, one can never be quite the same again. The next day I saw for the first time the scenes which will be forever seared on my eyeballs. It is not pleasant to see even a blood-stained bandage, but think how frightful it is to see bodies

of dead built hill upon hill, their blood making streams in the valley. To see things that once were men now with faces blue-gray, their eyelids swollen, their hair clotted with blood and dust, their white teeth set in their lips, their eyes staring into the blue sky—oh, Mother, it was terrible. The enemy's dead were with our own, and I could not help feeling for them, although they were our enemy and I was going to try and kill as many as I could. On many of the dead Russians are photographs of wives and children. Poor fellows, thousands of miles away from home, in a war which they do not understand, under haughty, brutal officers they do not love nor even respect—is it not natural of them to yearn after their wives and babies deep down in their hearts and console themselves with the sight of their pictures? At home these poor women must be just as anxiously waiting for their safe return as are our own, and they will never know how or where they died, and no place will mark their burial.

We saw many captured Russians, and the more I see of these sullen men, the more I feel that many of them are glad to surrender. They are not loyal to their officers because their officers are not loyal to them, and so they cannot command faithful service. Other kinds of service may be secured in other ways, but a man's



willingness to die on the battlefield at the command of another, can only come through the officers loving the men as their own children, and the men respecting the officers as their parents. When the men know that their leaders are pocketing their money, the money needed at home by suffering families; when their rations are reduced and they are made to endure unnecessary hardships while the leaders are living in luxury, how can they be expected to fight and die at their command!

Another thing I saw that hurt me, because I love horses and it made me think of my dear horse at home. The horses who die on the battlefield are also heroes, and they die a horrible death, writhing in agony, dying unnoticed, with not even a comforting pat to help them on the way. Their bodies were not buried but left on the field for wolves and crows to feed upon, their big strong bones to be bleached in the wild storms of the wilderness.

A Buddhist priest who is acting as a volunteer nurse is collecting fragments of shells to erect an image of Kwannon on Horseback, to comfort the spirits of the horses who die in the war, and I think it is a very worthy thing to do.

I must stop, Mother mine, we are going forward again. Oh, Mother, it is a great thing to fight in a noble cause like ours. We are going

to revenge the spirits of our dead soldiers in the Chinese war, who fought for, died, and won this land, but which was taken from them by fraud. The thousands who lie in unmarked graves in this dreary plain cannot sleep in peace until the flag under which they fought and died flies over the land again.

These Russians judge us as fighters by the size of our country and the size of our people, and boast of their own great country and their giants, but we will show them. They do not know the spirit of Yamoto, as firm as the iron of a hundred times beating, which will prove too strong for them. We are not a fighting machine, but a living and intelligent unit of a fighting force, willing to die under the flying flag of the Rising Sun, to return the Imperial favor with death and with death only, if it is necessary. It is all we can do for our Emperor and our Country.

Sayonara, Mother mine. I will write thee each time I get the chance, and thy face is ever with me.

Thy Soldier Son.

For the first time since Taro went away, Sono went to visit a friend. Her husband had an old aunt who was very fond of Taro, and Sono knew that she would like to read his letter and know that all was well with him.

When she arrived at the house, instead of announcing her the maid showed her immediately into the guest room. Sono stopped in amazement; she thought some mistake had been made. It was filled with busy women, sewing, chatting, cutting out clothing. All glanced at her when she entered and greeted her, still keeping their hands occupied with their work. The old aunt seeing Sono standing helplessly at the doorway, came to her and said:

"Why, O Sono San, at last you have come. Welcome, welcome, all hands are needed."

Sono could only look at the working women and at the piles of clothing and cloth before her. "What are you all doing?" she asked at last.

"We are working for the hospitals, bandages and gowns, and, oh, lots of things," Aunt Taka San replied vaguely, waving a hand at the piles of clothing evidently finished. "Come, we will make a place for you."

"But I did not come to work," Sono said. "I came to see Aunt Taka San."

The old lady looked at her over her glasses. "What did you come to see me for?" she asked. "No one comes to see me these days unless they work."

Sono laughed in a little embarrassed manner. "I came—I came—well, I have received a letter

from Taro and I thought you would like to hear it."

All the women looked up eagerly. "A letter," one said. "Read it to us."

"Read it—read it," was called from different parts of the room.

"But—but—I did not expect to make it quite so public," said Sono laughing.

"But read it," they protested. "We all know Taro, most of us are relatives in some way. Read it."

A mat was placed for Sono, and the women still sewing swiftly waited expectantly for the letter. Sono drew it from her sleeve, and glad of a chance to talk about Taro, read his letter. After it was finished there was talk of the news from the front, each woman having some relative or friend in the war, and she told the latest news concerning him. Sono passed a pleasant afternoon, although she did not offer to help the workers.

Sono had known that the women of Tokio were working for the hospitals and for the soldiers, but was very vague in her mind regarding the kind of work they were doing. She had thought it was the women of the working class who were employed. But here she saw ladies, women of the most exclusive circle in Tokio working with their hands, rolling bandages, making kimono

for convalescents, and she was surprised. Still she did not feel it her duty to join them. She had given freely of her money to war relief work, and felt that that was all that was required of her.

At last she rose to go home. "Won't you join us?" invited Taka San. "We meet here twice a week."

"No, I hardly think so," said Sono. "But if you wish I will give you some money to hire the work done much better than I would do it."

Taka San took the money Sono drew from her sleeve saying: "We take everything, anything, Sono. Time, money, anything. There are places for it all. If not for one thing, then another. Now there are the orphans! O Sono San, you must go with me to see my orphans. By the way, I have a little girl here, she has just been brought in by the servants. She was standing outside our gate holding a basket, asking for food. She says her father was killed, her mother is ill, and there are three other little ones, and no one to care for them."

Taka San clapped her hands and a maid entered. "Bring in that little girl if she is still here," she said.

The servant left the room and soon there appeared a little girl, her face worn and troubled,

with a look in her childish eyes that made Sono give a little cry of distress.

"Oh, you poor little thing," she said, and drew the child towards her. The child was petted until the smiles came to her baby face, then she was sent from the room.

"Don't you want to take her home?" inquired Taka San. "We are sending a basket of food to her house, and the servants are so busy they cannot leave for a time. You go with her and see what help the family need, but remember, Sono, there are hundreds just as badly off. Yes," as she saw Sono go to her sleeve again, "bring out that pocket book," and she laughingly held out her hand towards Sono. Sono made a little moue. "You have taken my all," she said with a laugh. "But I will send some to-morrow."

"No," said Taka San. "Bring it yourself, and I will take you to see some of the work that you should be doing."

The child was again sent for, a large basket of food was placed in the carriage, and Sono with the child beside her, drove away. They went to the poorer part of the city, and Sono entered a little house where a woman was lying on a futon, wasted with fever. Sono talked to her, and learned that she was alone except for her mother. Her husband had been killed and her

brother was at the front. Sono left the food and promised to send a doctor.

When she passed out of the house to enter her carriage, an old woman drawing a heavy cart, stopped by the carriage to rest. The old woman looked so feeble that Sono, whose sympathetic heart was easily touched at the sign of suffering, stopped with her foot on the step of the carriage. She looked at the old woman, whose wrinkled face was streaming with perspiration.

"Why are you drawing this heavy cart, Aba San?" she inquired.

The woman looked up at her with eyes dim with fatigue. "I must, Ok San," she replied simply.

"But have you no men to do this heavy work?" inquired Sono.

The old woman replied, "I have given five sons for His Majesty and for Japan." She said it proudly, with no trace of sorrow in her voice, as if she had only done her duty and was repaid in the fulfillment of that duty. Sono drew back for a moment, shocked, she could not explain the emotions agitating her at that moment. This old woman, this coolie woman had given five sons and she did not rebel, she did not cry out, she went on doing her duty, toiling like an animal to support herself, now that the support of her old age was taken away.

Sono's hand went in search of her bag, but she remembered that she had no money, and she said, "Come to me to-morrow morning. We will find some easier work for you," and turning to the coachman, she said, "Explain to her where we live." The coachman made the woman understand how to reach the house, and Sono drove away. She looked back and saw the woman's straining back as she tried to start the cart. All the way home she kept repeating to herself, "Five sons. How can she live and bear it?" What was this thing that caused an ignorant old working woman to be proud of the fact that she had given her sons for her country? Would she, Sono, ever feel that way?

That night in her dreams came the sad, troubled face of the little girl, and the worn, wrinkled one of the old woman. She rose early and went to Taka San and asked to be taken to the orphanage. Taka San gladly went with her, and there Sono saw groups of little children playing, studying, reciting, while the older ones were sewing garments for the younger children.

From the orphanage Taka San took her to a meeting of women who were working in the various organizations for the relief of the soldiers.

A man was speaking to them, telling them of the needs of the soldiers, of their life at the front, and especially of the wounded and the urgent

needs of the hospitals. He made a stirring appeal at the end.

“Our government is doing all that it can, our men are giving their lives for Japan, and to you, to the women of Japan is given the opportunity to help, to furnish the necessary materials for the work of our hospitals that are strained to the uttermost to take care of its wounded—to bring relief in the many ways that only a woman’s hand can bring. You have now a unique opportunity to show of what stuff you are made, to show the valiant blood that flows in your veins. The times are past when women may sit at home and wait for their men to come from the war. They must work for them, they must join hands with them in this great struggle, this struggle for a nation’s life. Japan must win in this conflict, and to win she must unite all her energies. You women must share your country’s burdens, not only by sending your husbands, fathers, sons, to fight the enemy, but also by eliminating every thing in your life that will not be for the help of your country. Small feuds, distrusting, jealousies and caste distinctions must give way before the great issue, this life-and-death struggle in which our nation is engaged. You must become a united womanhood, doing your work here while your men do theirs on the battlefield. Japan is fighting for her very existence, and

every hand in the Kingdom must be raised in her defense."

Sono went home from the meeting filled with a new sense of responsibility. She realized that more was required from her than simply her contributions of money; she must give of herself. Consequently she joined the women who met at the house of Taka San, and also a larger group who were working in one of the public buildings making the supplies to be sent to the hospitals at the front. Here she met women from all walks of life. She was surprised at the leveling of all class distinctions. The proud daughter of an old-time Samurai was working side by side with the small shopkeeper's wife. They were all of a sisterhood in their love and desire to help their beloved Japan.

As Sono worked, as she mingled with the women who were actuated by the one great interest, a peculiar, personal feeling towards the war came to her, a new sense of loyalty and patriotism was growing slowly within her. She was no longer simply an onlooker in the great game of life and death that was being played; she had entered the arena, and had her part in the conflict.

CHAPTER V

One evening when Sono returned home, she found a letter from Taro.

Honorable Little Mother:

I have had my first battle, and the wonder to me is that I am here, alive, writing you instead of lying over there in the ranks of the illustrious dead. Why is one shot on the battlefield and another not? It seems an inscrutable mystery. There are many who go into one fight after another, who see their comrades swept down around them, and who do not get a single wound. A shot is an uncanny thing, it seems to pick its mark and go directly there over all obstacles, and it depends upon one's luck whether it is for Jiro or me. It is queer how at first one instinctively lowers the head at the sound of a bullet. This does not mean that one is afraid; it is simply an action of the nerves, as you instinctively close your eyes if something is aimed at your face. But when the shots become like showers of rain, and we can no longer bow the head at each sound, we become bold at once. We seem to grow hardened at the fear of death.

We become hardened at so many things, Mother. When I first landed I stepped on a slight mound and was horrified to discover a dead Russian underneath, hardly covered with the sand. It was my first experience of stepping on a corpse, and I cannot forget the horror I felt. It is almost curious to think of that now, for I have since walked over khaki colored dead so thick that I could not feel the mother earth. The more we see of war, the less sensitive we become to the horrors of war. What was shocking and sickening at first, becomes a matter of indifference. If we should continue to be horrified as at first we could not endure the strain. When we come home shall we be callous to suffering? Will we have seen such frightful anguish that the ordinary pains of mankind will seem nothing to us? Will our hearts have become insensible to sorrow?

We have had a long, weary march. Toil and hardship we were prepared for, our minds were expecting bayonets and bullets, but here we have to fight with nature herself, to cross the wilderness, climb the mountains, battle with rain and wind, with heat and cold, with sand and dust. It weighs down the morale of a body of men quicker than actual battle.

But as we grew nearer the enemy, when we could hear more distinctly the cannon roar in

front of us, we never thought of our tired bodies, our empty water bottles. "The Japanese know how to march and to fight, but not how to retreat," said a captured Russian. To show one's back to the enemy was always considered the greatest disgrace a Samurai could bring upon himself—this idea is the central military idea of our army. We do not understand the word "masterly retreat," it is not in our book of tactics. The Russians have learned that lesson well. They run, feeling perhaps, that it is better to live as a tile than be broken as a jewel.

My first battle—Oh, Mother—it is hard to tell thee—because I cannot remember details. Everything passes through my mind as a dream; remembering it is like picking out things from the dark. I only remember that we arrived at a certain distance from the hill which we were to capture, and we were given a few hours rest. Then when we were told to go forward, we heard the Kimiga-yo sounded by trumpets far away at the left. The moon shone through the sky into our valley, and the long-drawn faint echo of the national hymn seemed to enter our very hearts. The music sounded to us as if His Majesty himself were ordering us to the charge. "Charge! Charge! For me and for Japan!"

It made every one of us straighten up and resolve to win or die under the flag of Nippon, and

with a shout of "Banzai," we charged the breast-works. The men rushed in like waves, but we were met by the machine guns, the most horrible thing in the war, that can fire more than six hundred bullets to the minute—can sprinkle its shots as a road is watered by a hose. Its sound is terrifying when you know what those little tap-tap-taps mean. At a distance it sounds like a loom heard late at night when everything else is hushed.

The Russians waited until our men came close to them and at the moment we were preparing to shout the Banzai of triumph, the machine guns swept us with their deadly fire until there was a hill of corpses. But we went back again and again and finally we won the hill and the Russians ran. They are like geese in a panic at times; when one wild goose is frightened, the whole line of geese gets into disorder; when one company wavers, it seems the whole regiment is ready for flight.

Oh, Mother, you should have heard us. Tired as we were, half of our comrades lying below us, yet our Banzais rose like surges of the sea.

A battle is often followed by a heavy rain which seems to be sent by the Gods to cleanse the earth of its impurities. We call this rain the "tears of joy" for the victors, and the "tears

of sorrow" for the defeated and the "tears of mourning" for the dead comrades.

This morning from a hill in front of us we saw white smoke rising. It was the cremation of our brave dead, the altar on which the sacrifice to the country was being burnt. Hundreds of souls that had given their all for their country were rising to Heaven in that smoke. We took off our caps and bowed to them. While their mothers at home were peacefully reeling silk and thinking of their sons at the front, while the wives with their babies at their backs were sewing and thinking of their husbands, those sons and husbands were being turned into volumes of smoke as a magnificent sacrifice to the God of War.

I should not tell thee, Mother mine, of the dreadful things of the war, but there is nothing that is not dreadful. Perhaps when I have become more hardened, I can sing and joke and laugh and see the humorous even in death, but now it is to me just one great, big, grim tragedy. Death is all around one, it is in everything one touches. One sees a friend, laughs a moment with him, he passes on and in a few hours you pass his body lying with staring eyes that see not.

At times I seemed stunned with the awfulness of it all, and then I want to fight, fight in revenge. I want to repay a thousandfold the

deaths I see around me. But some times, only when I am tired, Mother, I wonder if it is worth while; if any cause is worth the suffering, the lives of these poor, brave men.

But—I will not tell thee more, Mother. I wish you could see me. You would not know your son with his long hair and unshaven face with tanned skin grimed with sand and dust. I look like a strolling beggar or a mountain bandit, but remember, Honorable Mother Mine, whether beggar, bandit, or just plain soldier of Japan, *I love thee.*

Taro.

After reading the letter it came home to Sono that her boy was at the front, was close to the line of injury, in perpetual danger. At any time, night or day, that evil thing bearing death might wing its way to him. She tried to be the Spartan mother, proud to do her duty, ready to give the final sacrifice if it were demanded of her, but she knew that she was merely deceiving herself. When her trembling hands grasped the papers that told of a new battle, and when the lists of the killed, wounded and missing were published, her anguished eyes could hardly see the names as she hurriedly looked at the columns.

One evening when she and her husband were at their dinner, a cousin of her husband came

to her, a quiet, soft-voiced little woman, who was a great favorite of the family. Her eyes were swollen from weeping, and she was frantic with grief. Her husband had been killed and she had just received the news. She walked up and down the tatami, weeping and wringing her hands, in a very transport of sorrow. Finally she turned to Mr. Shimoseki and said, her eyes shining with anger through her tears: "What is this madness, war? Why must we have it? What is the use of diplomacy? Why are clever men like you at the head of the Government if they must take the lives of men like my husband to back up their diplomacy? You are not clever—if you were you could win by argument, instead of taking the lives of sons and fathers. Oh, I know what you will say—it is for Japan and liberty that will come with the peace, the glorious peace to come. What do I care for liberty, for a glorious peace, when my husband lies in Manchuria? What good will that peace do me when I hold my fatherless child in my arms! Will a glorious peace and the fact that Nippon can fly her flag on the Northern waters without let or hindrance, make the pain less in my heart when I bring my child into the world, my child who will never know a father?"

"Oh, I tell you war is a madness, a madness," and her voice rose to a wail of despair, "and it is we women who pay. Why should I bring a child



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WHILE their mothers at home were
peacefully reeling silk.



EVEN the ignorant peasant who has been

into the world, perhaps a man child, to have him sacrificed on an altar which I had no hand in building?"

Exhausted she threw herself face downwards on the tatami and beat it with her hands, moaning, "There are no Gods, there are no Gods, there are only devils."

At last the sobs ceased from exhaustion and when she was quiet Mr. Shimoseki accompanied her to her house. Sono was left sick and wretched. This terrible thing was striking close to her home.

Sono passed the days with a dull pain at her heart, but instead of breaking under the pressure, she was released by work. Her interest in all that concerned the war grew intense. She learned of many poor families whose sons and fathers had gone to the front and left them in want. She went to them and helped them with money, with care; gave clothing to the children, brought food to the homes. Her servants brought her news of a man in Taro's regiment whose wife died the night before he sailed, leaving a newly born child. She had the baby brought to her home. She visited the sick beds of the families of the soldiers, and the hospitals. She helped in all the war work that was being done by women. She gave her time, her money, her strength, and as she went among the people and saw their pa-

triotism, their love for their country, their worship of the Emperor, their willingness to sacrifice all for him and Japan, their spirit gradually took possession of her. With each message of victory from the front, she felt it was a personal victory; with each defeat a personal defeat.

Sono wrote Taro regularly, letters filled with home gossip, news of his friends, of the life in Tokio. But one night when she could not sleep, when she felt that she must express this new emotion that had been gradually growing within her to some one who would understand, she rose and sat down before her writing box. There was nothing to break the quiet silence of the night except from time to time the deep-toned booming of a drum in a temple nearby, which told her that a priest was keeping the night vigil. She poured out her heart to her boy.

My Son:

Thou hast been gone from me many months. I have had two letters from thee, but always day and night thou hast been with me, thy spirit face has been before me, thine hands have touched mine own, thy voice has been in my ears.

At first when you left I rebelled. Why should *my* son go, my only son? What were the commands of even His Majesty, the well being of even my country in comparison with the life of

my boy! But—I have changed—the Gods have opened my eyes and made me see. They have woven ropes to bind my purely selfish passions and desires, my selfish love for my son, my desire that he should live at the expense even of right. War has changed me, has changed every woman heart in Japan who has husband, son, or father on the battle line. It has made it *our* war. Our spirits are with you in the surge of conflict, our hands help hold the sword. We pray the Gods to give you fighting strength, and to give us waiting strength, because ours is the harder battle.

In the war with China I took no interest except the interest all must feel in the troubles of one's country. It was not *my* war. No part of me was in it. I did not give my heart's blood as I do now each day and moment. I know that Japan is fighting for the right, to conserve her ideals, to keep that brutal foreign country from grasping us in her great hairy hands and crushing not only our bodies but our souls. The Western influence would always crush our souls. They are even now with their foreign education trying to banish the protecting Gods that ruled in river, mountain, tree and grove. They say our stories of olden time and our tales of the Gods are superstitions and fairy tales fit for children only. They laugh at our religion. At Shinto, which teaches

man to think of his Emperor and of his country before thinking either of his family or himself. At Buddhism, which teaches him to master regret, to endure pain, and to accept as eternal law the vanishing of things loved and the tyranny of things hated.

These two great religions have made Japan what it is to-day, and the foreigner is learning at Nanshan and Port Arthur the spirit it inspires in its followers. The Western man of learning may study our Sacred Books to learn of our religion, but its realities live not in books, nor rites, nor in commandments, but in the national heart of which it is the highest expression. Underneath all that the new education tells us is quaint superstition and artless myths and useless magic, there thrills a mighty force—the soul of a race. And a nation must be allowed to develop and save her own soul; she can not borrow nor copy one from another.

But we must have liberty to worship our Gods, and I am willing to give my son, and my boy is willing to give his life, that the people of Japan may have that liberty. As the Divine Lamp in the Temple of Kwannon has been kept bright through all the ages, so has the spark of liberty never been dimmed in our race. Even the ignorant peasant who has been taken from his rice fields, or the coolie who has gone from his jin-

rickshaw, feels dimly that his life is not a useless sacrifice. It makes these men who seem merely clods of earth while in their fields or bending with straining backs over their labors, heroes on the battlefields.

We ask when we see them living like animals, surrounded with their enormous families, passing unthinking, unbeautiful, sordid lives, what reason there is for their existence. Why are they born, why do they marry, bring children into life, leaving behind them men who go through the same dull routine, seemingly their only reason for life that of recreating their species? Is it because the Power who rules the Universe needs his thousands and his tens of thousands to carry out some great project for the good of the world? At last it seems when they have fulfilled their destiny, when there are sufficient numbers, the clods become animate; they fight and die blindly for the countless millions who will follow them.

The time may come when the hills of Port Arthur are razed to the ground and the rivers of Manchuria go dry, but the time will never come when the names of hundreds of thousands of these loyal men who gave their lives for their Sovereign and their country will be forgotten. They will live forever in the great warm love of the people, and these sons of the soil, fighting bravely and dying on the battlefields, instead of

ignobly on a straw mat under their thatched roofs, shall have their sacrifice told in song and story. Their names shall be fragrant for a thousand years and lighten ten thousand ages. Then they and their clod-like ancestors shall not have lived in vain.

Oh, my son, the price of honor, of taking part in war must be paid—paid in the lives of our sons—in the broken hearts of mothers, but we pay it gladly. We mothers of Japan know the word renunciation. I, your mother, have learned well the bitter lesson of surrendering all that my heart held dear. First, as a child, I gave my doll at the command of my father. With that doll I then gave all within my childish world. In girlhood days I gave my lover at the command of my family. It seemed to me that I gave my life, but now I know it was nothing to what I am gladly giving at the command of my Emperor—my son. But if the life of my son will help Japan to live, I place my gift upon the altar with a smile.

Oh, Son of mine, there is no love like a mother's love. Our blood has been your life, our hearts have made your cradle. We have watched each tiny footstep, we have tried to sweep each pebble from your pathway, and now in the lonely nights when we are helpless to guard you with our love, we think and dream and remember each

thought of your baby days, and our arms ache for a pillowing head. We say, when lying wide-eyed, staring into the night, why should we suffer to bring sons into the world? Why should our hearts be torn from our bosoms as a sacrifice to the God of War? But then with morning light we remember that life is born from death, and to die that a nation may live, that the weak may not be trodden upon by the strong, is not death but the changing of men into Gods.

You speak often of revenge. That is natural for a Japanese. In the olden time a Samurai must revenge the death of his Lord, a son the death of his father, a servant the death of his master. The feeling of revenge is yours by right of inheritance, but I do not like the word. You are not fighting for revenge, but for a principle, for *justice*. You are fighting against a great nation which would crush a weaker—you are fighting for the freedom of a people. I want you to keep that thought within your mind when going into battle, keep it burning there as clear and pure as the little lamp that glows before the household shrine. I had rather that you were lying with those who sleep the sleep of centuries, lying out there under the gray stones, than that you should lose the *only* spirit that can make war holy.

Son of mine, my boy, thy mother's arms stretch

in longing across the seas to-night, as do the arms
of all the mothers of Japan.

I love thee, my love is measured by its sacri-
fice, I can say no more.

Thy Mother.

CHAPTER VI

As the war progressed, as news of victories came from the front, the people showed in every possible manner their patriotism, loyalty and confidence in their country's rulers, and their faith in that country's ultimate triumph. The whole people, great and small, rich and poor, man and woman, were uniting all their energies to win. They realized that Japan must not be vanquished by a Western nation, that she was fighting for her national life, and they were willing and glad to sacrifice everything, sons, husbands, fathers, wealth, to help her in her struggle. Sono's days were passed in work in this environment, and she imbibed its spirit. She was thinking always, always about the war, about life and death, about freedom and liberty for her country. She could think of nothing else. She thought of it in the morning when she went about her household duties; while she was being driven to some meeting place of women who were engaged in war work; while her busy fingers were rolling bandages, or making kimonas for the wounded; while she was lying at night on her futon, when sleep would not come to her eyes.

Now and then some incident took her mind from the great struggle for a moment, but it always returned to it. It had blotted out everything else, it towered over her like a huge black shadow, day after day, week after week, regardless of what she was doing. It became her war. She was in it, she was fighting on those lines in the North. Her spirit was there, climbing those hills, lying in those trenches, while only her body was here in Tokio. She had sent the best part of her, her son, he whom she loved more than life, to that place of death, and she herself was with him, was part of him. Yet more and more her fear for the life of her son was being absorbed in the fear of defeat for her country. Something bigger than mother love had been kindled in her breast—love for her country.

She went to the temples when prayers were offered for the success of their arms, and at home each morning, she knelt before the family shrine and gave the usual offerings, but now there was an unselfish prayer in her heart. As she filled the tiny cups with water and with rice, as she lighted the candles and the incense, she prayed the departed spirit to be not only with her boy on the battlefield, but to be with all the sons of mothers who were fighting for their country's honor. It was for Japan's life she was praying—not for the life of her son.

The days and weeks passed and at last she received another letter in the dear handwriting.

Mother Mine:

I have just come from a service for our dead held in a deserted farmyard. An altar was made from a table we found. It was covered with a white cloth and a picture of Amida Buddha hung above it. In front were boxes containing the ashes of the dead. The dim light of candles added to the gloom and sadness of the place. The insects singing far and near seemed to chant a funeral hymn.

The officers of the division formed a circle before the altar, the soldiers stood behind them, and when the reading by the priest from the Sacred Books was ended, the commander stepped forward and solemnly offered incense. Other officers, one by one, followed the General, bowing and offering incense. There were tears in the eyes of many of our men who had fought with their brave comrades, but who lived to fight again, as they bowed before the spirit throne of those who had gone before.

When the ceremony was over a shower came up and the rain pattering through the willow leaves seemed like tears of Heaven.

Last night Ichiro died. He was one of the forlorn hope engineers who go forward to break

the wire entanglements, and they are always annihilated. But when volunteers are asked to go in any forlorn hope, so many step forward that the commander has to pick and choose.

Before the battle we drank the death cup of water together. He was taken and I remain. He was horribly wounded, but he put his hands together and murmured, "Namu-Amida-Butsu, "Namu-Amida-Butsu," then, with his last dying breath he cried, "Long Live His Majesty."

Our men are wonderful, Mother. They give their lives freely, with a smile on their lips. They face death as though going home. Though panting and gasping and dying, with livid faces and blood-stained bodies, they keep the true spirit of Bushido, which cannot be stained with the dust of battle, but with dying breath they cry, "Tenno Heika Banzai."

Fighting together makes men like brothers. They grow dearer to you as you do not know what day you will be separated. I have lost much, Mother, in the loss of Ichiro, and Japan has lost much. He was a poet, a dreamer, an artist, who would have done great things for his country. He would have made its spirit known to the world through his songs. He would have given pleasure to countless thousands, have made them see beauty through his eyes, have given them songs to sing at their work. Young girls

would have been able to have expressed their love through his words, to give utterance to their dreams, and old men would have found consolation for their weight of years in his poems. And he must lie out here in Manchuria, with not even a stone to mark his resting place! It seems a useless sacrifice; so many others could have taken his place, so many that had no gifts, but he was taken and they remain. Like many of our best men, he was the first to go.

He was my friend, Mother. We rested under the shade of the same tree, we drank from the same stream of water, and he is gone. No more will I lie in the moonlight with him and hear his low, clear voice chanting some thing of beauty. The men are broken hearted, as they loved him. At night when they heard his voice, they would come quietly and sit or lie on the ground around him, listening, entranced, as he sang or recited to them. He sang of loyalty and fealty to our dear Japan in a way that made men leave him with a new light on their faces, a new resolution in their hearts; with a feeling that if they gave their lives for duty, it was a glory to die.

Mother, it makes one think to live as we are living now, with death beside us. What is life? What is that wonderful something that left Ichiro when his face became gray and his panting breath ceased? Out of unknown darkness he rose for a

moment, sang his songs to us, inspired us, made us see the world with clearer eyes; then he fell back into darkness. So a wave rises, catches the sun's gleam, flashes it to other waves, then sinks back into the sea. So a flower comes from the ground, unfolds its petals to the light, gives joy to those who see it, then becomes earth again; or a bird sings away, thrilling our hearts with his burst of music as he journeys to the stars. But are they gone? Do men's lives end even as all earthen vessels made by the hand of the potter end by being broken?

I like to think what you taught me, that those who have gone before are not less real than the living. That they take a part in our daily life, sharing our joys and our sorrows. To the soldier, our comrade left on the battlefield is still fighting with us. He adds his strength to the weakening arm, his spirit passes into our spirit and inspires us with courage to undertake the impossible, and makes us common men heroes so that we will not cause them shame.

When I speak of religion, Mother, I feel once more the light touch of your dear hand guiding my steps to the household shrine for the morning worship before the tablets of our ancestors, and even though I may have left the Eight Fold Path, Mother, I find my lips murmuring at times the simple prayers you taught me as a child. I

can in memory hear the soft clapping of hands in prayers before the temple altars, like the soft dashing and plashing of many waters; I can hear the whirring of doves from the eaves as I scatter rice in the courtyard; I can see the storks standing straight and solemn as they take the grain from my hand; the deer awaiting cakes and caresses. It is all Peace, Mother, Peace and Quiet and Rest, that will fall as a balm on our tortured hearts when we come home again.

But yet, Mother, war is a good thing for a nation. Men become regenerated through war. It changes them, it gives them a new soul that glows from out their faces. The boyish faces, so frank, so cheerful, so seemingly never to have borne the sorrows of life, become lads' faces no longer. The boys become men, with the swinging stride of a soldier, men who have slaughtered and stormed, men who have suffered things that never can be written, men who have felt and *lived*.

It is a good thing for a boy to fight for his country. It makes that country more real and dear to you when you are defending her. You have the feeling you would have if you were defending your mother. It makes you strong and manly, you want to give your life in her defense, and she becomes more precious to you because you are protecting her, because she needs you.

You may be only one in the countless thousands who are doing the same, but you know that your hand that holds the sword helps make up the mighty arm that will eventually crush her foes and guard her freedom.

And what a feeling it gives you for the flag! Before, I saluted it respectfully as the flag of my country, but now, Mother, now when I have followed it through the hail-like shower of bullets and the thunder of cannon into battle, when I have seen men die to keep it waving, when I have seen it planted on hard-won breastworks with the ones who fought for the victory lying all around it, it is more than a fluttering emblem. It is a living, breathing spirit that the sight of causes my heart to come into my throat, that gives me a feeling I cannot express. I can only cry with all my might, "Banzai! Banzai!"

Every boy should fight at least once for his country if he would learn what depths of feeling he has deep within him. Never again in the years to come would he hear the words "my country" without glorying in the thought that through his help she represents liberty to the people of his race; that she is not living under the iron hand of an oppressor. He would never see the flag without a thrill, knowing that it is the flag that he defended; never hear the national anthem without a deep heart throb within him that only

those who have heard its call to face death at the inspiring sound of its music, can understand.

My Country—My Emperor—My Flag—Oh, Mother, they are not words to me; they represent the things for which I live and for which I'd gladly die.

But I must not write thee more, I hear the bugles calling the men to rest—the last call for so many, as to-morrow they will summons them perhaps to the shadowy silence of perpetual rest. To-morrow the final assault will be made on Port Arthur, the triumphal tune will be sung, the *Kamiga-yo* will be played, and the great *Banzai* of victory will be shouted to the Emperor. Who will hear it and who will lie out on the field? But the sacrifice will not be in vain. Every noble sacrifice brings nearer the hour of Japan's triumph. The spirits of those loyal ones who died unconsolated because they could take no part in our final victory will be lulled to rest because to-morrow a flag will be waving over Port Arthur—the flag of the Rising Sun.

I love thee, I am thy son

Taro.

Oh, little Mother, I long for thee, for the clasp of thy hand to-night.

CHAPTER VII

Sono carried this letter in the bosom of her kimona where she could feel its touch. As she did with all of his letters, she did not put the last one in the box until another one arrived, for she wanted it near her so that she could read it over and over, feeling that the boy was with her as she caressed the paper that his hand had touched.

About a week after she received the letter, she saw a man come up the path, a man dressed as a small official, and for a moment her heart stood still. But, and she smiled softly to herself, last night there was vapor on the little cover as she took it from the soup bowl, and it signified that her boy was well.

The visitor was ushered into the guest room, and Sono bowed before him. She knelt upon the mat opposite him, and after an exchange of polite conventionalities, she prepared the tea, pouring it into tiny cups, and served it kneeling in the graceful attitude that came to her so naturally.

The man seemed unwilling to broach the subject of his visit, and Sono did not press him, but finally he drew from his pocket a piece of paper with the Imperial crest upon it, and handed it



I CAN hear the whirring of the doves
from the eaves as I scatter rice.

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*CHILDREN made fatherless, mothers made childless,
women doing the work of men.*

to Sono. She took the paper and opened it, and for a moment darkness came to her,—which is the pity of the Gods. Her hands went to her heart over which was lying the last letter of Taro. Her boy was gone.

The note informed her that he had given his life in the capture of Port Arthur.

She swayed, half rose, and her pallid face and anguished eyes told the story to the watching man opposite her. He bowed his head before her grief. Sono stared at the man with unseeing eyes. She was benumbed with sorrow. She could not even feel her pain. It seemed as if a cold hand had clutched her heart and crushed it within her bosom. She sat there for many moments, a living statue of despair and anguish. A movement made by the man caused her to live again. She remembered he was a guest. She straightened, and in a low tone but with lips that trembled in spite of her efforts for self control she said, "I have had the honor to give my son for His Majesty and for Japan," and she bowed her head to the mat as if saluting the Emperor.

The official said nothing; he could say nothing, with that white face opposite him, with those tortured eyes before him. He simply bowed.

There was silence. After a time Sono put her hand towards the hibachi and taking the little kettle from the coals, said with even tones, in a

voice that did not falter, "Your honorable tea is cold. May I give you more?"

After a few moments the man rose and said good-by. Sono accompanied him to the door and bowed to him. When he had gone she stood looking around the room, gazing with unseeing eyes into the gray days without her boy. He would never come back to her, she would never see his familiar figure sitting beside her on the mat. She could think of nothing but that her boy would not come back. *He would not come back.* She was alone. Then as she stood there, her hand upon the heart that seemed to have stopped its beating, silent, not even able to cry out her sorrow, the words came to her, "given his life in the capture of Port Arthur." Port Arthur had fallen, that invincible fort, the greatest Eastern stronghold of her nation's enemy. Its fall meant the enemy was defeated, that the threatening cloud would no longer be a shadow over Japan. Victory was hers, this tiny Island Empire had vanquished the greatest power in the Western world. Japan could worship its Gods in peace, could fly her flag on the waters of the Northern ocean. Her peasant sons could sleep at night beneath their straw-thatched roofs in safety, knowing that the power of that creeping, cruel, grasping hand that had hovered over them was broken.

Japan victorious! yes, but at what cost! Victory bought by the blood of her sons. Children made fatherless, mothers made childless, wives made widows.

But the victory was worth the sacrifice. Victory meant the liberation of a people from the aggressions of a brutal force. Japan would never have to bow beneath an alien rule, her people would never be the slaves of an alien master. She had won her liberty, and no wife would repent giving the life of her husband, and no mother the gift of her son. Did she, Sono, regret the life of her son? Regret,—Regret——? Her life would be one long sorrow, but above that sorrow and heart-breaking knowledge that she must be forever alone, was the exultant thought that *she* had helped pay the price of victory. *She* had given a life, more than *her* life, she had given the life of her son.

She raised her head, a look of exaltation upon her face. Japan had triumphed, and Japan's triumph was her triumph; Japan's victory, her victory.

Her eyes into which a light had come gazed slowly around the room and she saw before her the family shrine. She looked at it a moment, then she crossed the room, quietly, softly, and, kneeling before the shrine, she slowly opened the doors. In it were the family Ithai, the tablets of

the dead. One had no name upon it. To-morrow the spirit name of her boy would be written upon it by the family priest, and from that day she must speak of him by his new name, by the name which was his in the Land of Shadows. But to-night he was her boy, her Taro, and she could call him by the name she loved.

She placed the vacant Ihai in the center of the altar, and took from within the shrine two candlesticks on which were unlighted candles, and placed them in front of the open doors. Then she placed before the candles the two burners holding little sticks of incense, and in front of them two small cups. She slowly lighted the candles, the incense, and poured rice into one of the cups and water into the other. Then still kneeling before the shrine around which the incense was rising in faint blue curls of smoke, she gazed with all her heart in her eyes at the Ihai in the center of the altar, the Ihai that was now all that remained to her of her son.

But no, it was not all that remained! Behind that Ihai, entwined with the smoke of the incense, she saw Japan rise triumphant. Japan with the sword of victory in the one hand and holding aloft with the other the flag of the Rising Sun.

She stared at the vision beautiful, her face glowing as if from some holy light from within, then she touched her head to the mat once—

twice—thrice—and holding out her hands to the Thai whose gilding gleamed from within the dark interior, she gave a low cry in which the note of exaltation rose clear and strong above the anguish in her voice,

“Sayonara, my Taro San, Sayonara.”











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